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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

**THESIS**

**MISSILE DEFENSE FOR TAIWAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR  
U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN EAST ASIA**

by

Darren E. Rice

September 2003

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

H. Lyman Miller  
Gaye Christoffersen

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**MISSILE DEFENSE FOR TAIWAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR  
U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN EAST ASIA**

Darren E. Rice  
Lieutenant, United States Navy  
B.A., The Pennsylvania State University, 1997

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
September 2003**

Author: Darren E. Rice

Approved by: H. Lyman Miller  
Thesis Advisor

Gaye Christoffersen  
Second Reader

James Wirtz  
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs



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## **ABSTRACT**

The potential provision of ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities to the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan carries an array of implications for U.S. interests and purposes in East Asia. Although missile defense would assist Taiwan in defending itself from Chinese ballistic missiles, it could generate adverse repercussions that impede Washington's ability to meet its strategic and foreign policy goals.

This thesis addresses how the delivery of BMD to Taiwan might affect U.S. security interests in East Asia. Beijing's long-held fears of U.S. "hegemony" and containment may incite China to undertake political, strategic, or armed courses of action contrary to U.S. interests. Closer defense ties between Taipei and Washington might also jeopardize the ambiguity of the U.S.-China-Japan strategic triangular relationship, thereby weakening regional stability. Additionally, Japan may encounter difficulties in reconciling its role in a possible crisis in the Taiwan Strait, producing complications for the U.S.-Japan security alliance. Lastly, BMD in Taiwan could have unfavorable consequences for Washington's national security strategy, particularly its desires to stem the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to foster cooperative relationships with other nations.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>RELEVANCE TO U.S. INTERESTS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>RESEARCH QUESTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>TAIWAN AND BMD IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>TAIWAN IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.	Background .....	7
2.	Contemporary Context of U.S.-ROC Relations .....	12
a.	<i>Arms Sales</i> .....	12
b.	<i>Military-to-Military Cooperation</i> .....	13
c.	<i>The American Institute in Taiwan</i> .....	13
d.	<i>Political Influence</i> .....	14
e.	<i>Strategic Ambiguity</i> .....	14
<b>B.</b>	<b>MISSILE DEFENSE IN U.S. EAST ASIA POLICY .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE IN TAIWAN’S SECURITY .....</b>	<b>17</b>
1.	PRC Missile Threat.....	18
a.	<i>DF-15 (CSS-6/M-9)</i> .....	18
b.	<i>DF-11 (CSS-7/M-11)</i> .....	20
c.	<i>DF-21 (CSS-5)</i> .....	21
d.	<i>Missile Developments and Countermeasures</i> .....	23
2.	Missile Defense Options.....	23
a.	<i>PATRIOT Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3)</i> .....	24
b.	<i>Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)</i> .....	25
c.	<i>Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense</i> .....	26
<b>D.</b>	<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>THE VIEW FROM BEIJING .....</b>	<b>29</b>
1.	Beijing’s Perceptions of Taiwan .....	29
2.	Beijing’s Perceptions of Missile Defense.....	31
a.	<i>Missile Defense in Japan</i> .....	33
b.	<i>Missile Defense in Taiwan</i> .....	34
<b>B.</b>	<b>THE VIEW FROM TOKYO .....</b>	<b>35</b>
1.	Tokyo’s Perceptions of Taiwan.....	36
2.	Tokyo’s Perceptions of Missile Defense .....	39
<b>C.</b>	<b>THE VIEW FROM TAIPEI .....</b>	<b>42</b>
1.	Taipei’s Perceptions of Missile Defense .....	42
<b>D.</b>	<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>PRC REACTIONS TO BMD .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>DETERMINANTS.....</b>	<b>49</b>
1.	Economic Modernization .....	49



2.	Security Outlook .....	50
3.	Internal Politics .....	51
4.	BMD System Capabilities.....	52
5.	Rhetoric.....	53
B.	COURSES OF ACTION .....	54
1.	Political.....	54
a.	<i>Political Pressure/Rhetoric</i> .....	54
b.	<i>Exploitation of International Regimes</i> .....	55
c.	<i>Diminished Support for U.S. Counter-terrorism Efforts</i> .....	56
d.	<i>Exploitation of the North Korean Issue</i> .....	57
e.	<i>Renewed or Expanded Proliferation Practices</i> .....	58
f.	<i>Economic Sanctions</i> .....	60
g.	<i>Economic Sanctions on the ROC</i> .....	60
2.	PRC Strategic Approaches.....	61
a.	<i>Upgraded Missile Capabilities</i> .....	61
b.	<i>Continued PLA Modernization</i> .....	62
c.	<i>Technology Acquisition Through Subversion and Espionage</i> .....	63
d.	<i>Missile Demonstration</i> .....	64
e.	<i>Sino-Russian Collusion</i> .....	65
3.	Armed Approaches .....	66
a.	<i>Blockade or Quarantine</i> .....	66
b.	<i>Precision Missile Strike</i> .....	67
c.	<i>Amphibious Assault/Full-Scale Attack</i> .....	68
d.	<i>Combination Attack</i> .....	68
C.	SUMMARY .....	69
V.	IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S.-CHINA-JAPAN RELATIONS .....	71
A.	STRATEGIC TRIANGULAR RELATIONS .....	71
1.	Loss of Strategic Ambiguity .....	71
2.	PRC Isolation .....	73
3.	Military Instability.....	74
B.	U.S.-JAPAN ALLIANCE.....	75
1.	Entrapment.....	76
a.	<i>Regional and Bilateral Stability</i> .....	76
b.	<i>Socio-Economic Welfare</i> .....	77
c.	<i>Domestic and Political Resistance</i> .....	78
2.	Implications .....	79
C.	SUMMARY .....	80
VI.	RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	83
A.	IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY .....	83
1.	Combating WMD Proliferation.....	83
a.	<i>Recommendation</i> .....	84
2.	Strengthening the U.S.-Japan Alliance .....	85
a.	<i>Recommendation</i> .....	86
3.	Forging Cooperative Relations with Centers of Global Power .....	86
a.	<i>Recommendation</i> .....	87



<b>B. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....</b>	<b>97</b>



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## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS**

ABL	Airborne Laser
ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
ACS	AEGIS Combat System
AIT	American Institute in Taiwan
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATBM	Anti-Tactical Ballistic Missile
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
C2	Command and Control
C2BM	Command, Control and Battle Management
C3I	Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence
C4I	Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence
CAP	Combat Air Patrol
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CEP	Circular Error of Probability
CSIST	Chungshan Institute of Science and Technology
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ECS	Engagement Control Station
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
IRBM	Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile
JDA	Japanese Defense Agency
KKV	Kinetic Kill Vehicle
KMT	Kuomintang
LACM	Land-Attack Cruise Missile
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MARV	Maneuvering Reentry Vehicle
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry
MIRV	Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle
MND	Ministry of National Defense
MRBM	Medium-Range Ballistic Missile
MRV	Multiple Reentry Vehicle
MSDF	Maritime Self Defense Force
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NAIC	National Air Intelligence Center
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAC-3	Patriot Advanced Capability Three
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization



SDF	Self Defense Force
SLBM	Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile
SRBM	Short-Range Ballistic Missile
TEL	Transport Erector Launcher
THAAD	Theater High Altitude Area Defense
TMD	Theater Missile Defense
TRA	Taiwan Relations Act
TSEA	Taiwan Security Enhancement Act
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. BACKGROUND**

As the United States strives to restore order in a post-9/11 society, the ability to establish and maintain a stable international environment that contributes to global security and economic interests has been the focus of U.S. foreign policy. Nowhere is this more applicable than in East Asia, which remains one of the most volatile areas in the world. One of the chief interests of the United States is to foster an environment in East Asia conducive to bilateral and multilateral cooperation on issues of security and economics.<sup>1</sup>

The United States has several competing interests that factor into its efforts to foster a beneficial environment in East Asia. Of these interests, the preservation of America's security relationship with the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan is arguably the most controversial. The United States has legally tasked itself with ensuring Taiwan's security through the sale of arms and weapons technology, despite vociferous objections from the People's Republic of China (PRC). As part of its endeavor to bolster and upgrade Taiwan's defense apparatus, the United States desires Taiwan to invest in a missile defense program as part of an integrated defense capability against Chinese missile attacks.

Ballistic missile defense (BMD) exacerbates what is already a contentious issue in Asia. China's unwillingness to abate some of the political and military pressure that it exerts upon what it considers to be a renegade province has escalated tensions in the region, inadvertently affecting the foreign policies of other regional players. Japan and South Korea, for instance, conduct more conservative foreign policies regarding Taiwan so as not to compromise their bilateral relations with China. For the United States, the

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<sup>1</sup> See remarks by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Singapore, 31 May 2003, <[www.dod.gov/speeches/2003/sp20030531-depsecdef0265.html](http://www.dod.gov/speeches/2003/sp20030531-depsecdef0265.html)>; Berta Gomez, "U.S. Officials Say Stronger Security Measures Speed Trade," *Department of State International Information Programs*, 25 October 2002, <[usinfo.state.gov/regional/ea/apec/mexico/greenwdaskey.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/ea/apec/mexico/greenwdaskey.html)>, 19 July 2003; and Alan P. Larson, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs, "Economic Priorities of the National Security Strategy," December 2002, <[usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/1202/ijpe/pj7-4larson.htm](http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/1202/ijpe/pj7-4larson.htm)>, 19 April 2003.



desire to nurture a productive relationship with East Asian nations—including China—means that Washington must tread carefully when dealing with the Taiwan issue for fear of antagonizing Beijing and upsetting regional stability.

Washington has been vocal about its desire to deliver BMD technology to Taiwan, although it has seemingly backed away from earlier intentions to incorporate Taiwan into a multilateral missile defense architecture. Instead, the United States has prodded Taiwan officials to purchase Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) units, which could be used to defend strategic points throughout Taiwan from Chinese short and intermediate range ballistic missiles. ROC President Chen Shui-bian has gone on record expressing his government's interest in and need for a missile defense program with the United States, asserting that China's missile threat merits the collective attention of all East Asian countries.<sup>2</sup> But internal political dissent, budget limitations, and doubts about the system's efficacy have tempered these sentiments thus far.

## **B. RELEVANCE TO U.S. INTERESTS**

The Taiwan dilemma is a potentially unstable matter that, if mishandled, could dramatically undermine East Asian stability. Therefore, the United States must be concerned with several issues when contemplating the delivery of missile defenses to Taiwan. First, Beijing's tolerance level will function as an important litmus test that will help determine the regional implications of such a decision. The United States is committed to the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue, yet Beijing perceives Taiwan efforts to enhance its security with missile defense as politically threatening and dangerously close to crossing Beijing's self-professed "red-lines" for military action against the island. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not missile defense in Taiwan, regardless of the type implemented, will serve as a sufficient enough irritant to spur China towards forms of retaliation beyond the scope of mere rhetoric.

Second, Taiwan missile defenses, especially any developed or supported by the U.S. military, will incite China to place political pressure upon regional nations to reaffirm their support to the "One China" policy and to regard U.S. efforts to strengthen Taiwan as escalatory and provocative. This will cast a pall on the regional security

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<sup>2</sup> Lin Chieh-yu and Lin Mei-chin, "Taiwan President Says Asia Needs TMD," *Taipei Times*, 26 February 2003, in FBIS.



context, making it difficult for the United States to cultivate cooperative relationships in other areas of interest.

Third, the PRC will likely interpret the development of a U.S.-supported Taiwan missile defense as another facet of American ambitions to encircle China. Beijing could arrive at this conclusion if it regards U.S.- Taiwan defense cooperation as an augmentation of more formal and open U.S. defense relations with Japan and South Korea, a perception easily fostered by the implementation of an East Asian regional missile defense. If Beijing settles into this mindset, Washington will encounter increasing difficulties in soliciting PRC cooperation in support of U.S. security and policy interests.

Collaboratively, these issues will significantly affect America's ability to pursue and meet its global interests. Potentially destabilizing factors resulting from Taiwan's acquisition of missile defense will affect how the United States engages friends and allies, implements foreign policy, participates in the globalized economy, and preserves its security.

#### **C. RESEARCH QUESTION**

This thesis examines the implications of introducing missile defense into Taiwan for U.S. security interests in East Asia in order to ascertain whether or not such an initiative is in America's best interests. By analyzing the ramifications for each nation involved and by determining how these factors play into U.S. strategy, conclusions on the conduciveness of missile defense in Taiwan to stated U.S. policy objectives might be obtained.

#### **D. ORGANIZATION**

Chapter II provides background and context for American foreign policy regarding Taiwan and missile defense. It first outlines how and why the issue of Taiwan's reunification with the PRC has become such a focal point for U.S. policy in Asia. The chapter then turns to missile defense in U.S. foreign policy, explaining how U.S. threat perceptions transitioned to focus on regional ballistic missile threats. It maps out the rationale for missile defense from an American perspective, analyzing the evolution of U.S. concerns regarding the protection of U.S. and Taiwan security interests, and detailing the various threats present in the region. China's ballistic missile program



has been expressly designed to neutralize Taiwanese air defense forces, and consists of hundreds of short and intermediate range missiles—conventional and nuclear—more than capable of reaching Taiwan. The United States seeks to deter Beijing’s willingness, and the willingness of other nations, to employ these weapons.

Chapter III studies the separate perceptions of the Taiwan question and missile defense held by each of the region’s principal actors—the PRC, Japan, and Taiwan. For Beijing, issues of sovereignty, the encouragement of Taiwan independence, the potential degradation of its ability to coerce Taiwan through ballistic missile threats, and concerns over U.S. hegemony dominate a robust list of grievances towards missile defense. These anxieties complement the PRC’s unwavering demand that Taiwan issue be left to Beijing and Taipei to decide without outside intervention. Tokyo’s silence on the issue of Taiwan unification only partially obfuscates its concerns over regional stability, the maintenance of profitable economic ties with both sides of the strait, and the preservation of productive bilateral relations with Beijing and Washington. Japan also places some emphasis on key cultural and political ties with Taiwan that transcend matters of security and could factor significantly in Tokyo’s logic. For Taipei, hopes that BMD will bring relief from PRC coercion and serve as a conduit for enhanced security ties between Taipei and Washington—thus strengthening the likelihood of Taiwan’s inclusion in a larger missile defense cooperative with Japan—are sobered by pervasive concerns over cost, feasibility, and utility.

Chapter IV explores the potential ramifications of providing Taiwan with BMD. It first outlines China’s potential measures of recourse, ranging from increased rhetoric to an all-out attack on the island. The PRC predicates the success of its military modernization and missile program on the ability to dissuade U.S. military backing of Taiwan.<sup>3</sup> Depending on several outside circumstances, a U.S.-ROC missile defense initiative could force China’s hand. Beijing vehemently objects to the delivery of any missile defense systems to Taiwan, and it is especially apprehensive about the prospects of a regional missile defense system that incorporates the United States, Japan, and Taiwan, viewing such collaboration as a reconstitution of a de facto U.S.-ROC military

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<sup>3</sup> Rex Kiziah, *US-Led Cooperative Theater Missile Defense in Northeast Asia*, Maxwell Paper, no. 21 (Alabama: Air War College, 2000), p. 7.



alliance. Any perceived momentum towards this end immediately sparks nationalistic furor in Beijing and stimulates renewed warnings against Taiwan independence.

Chapter V investigates the implications for U.S.-China-Japan relations. It first explores the implications of Taiwan missile defense for balance within the strategic triangle. BMD in Taiwan could be a deathblow for Sino-American relations, with bilateral cordiality possibly plummeting beyond the depths witnessed during the EP-3 crisis of April 2001. A similar trend might be expected in the Sino-Japanese relationship, where concerns over possible Japanese support of U.S. military action in a cross-strait conflict might rekindle speculations about Japanese militarization that date back to World War II. Ultimately, Beijing might perceive a dangerous shift in the triangle that leaves China uncomfortably isolated. The chapter also discusses the implications for the U.S.-Japan security alliance, delving into Tokyo's enthusiasm (or reluctance) to proceed in step with U.S. strategy. Of particular concern are doubts about Japan's willingness to participate in a strait crisis of questionable pertinence to Japanese security and the probability that the Japanese Diet might begin to see its own national interests compromised by U.S. ambitions.

Chapter VI consolidates the previous chapters' findings in order to draw conclusions for U.S. security interests. It specifically targets America's ability to exercise its post-9/11 strategies of counter-proliferation and coalition building with global centers of power. China is already skeptical of U.S. global strategy, seeing it as but another facet of American hegemony. If prompted, the PRC might be impelled to take measures that would jeopardize U.S. counter-proliferation efforts or otherwise impede the realization of American strategic objectives. The chapter discusses and analyzes these possibilities before drawing conclusions and offering suggestions for a course of action that could better enable the United States to meet its security goals.

## **E. METHODOLOGY**

These conclusions derive from the analysis of media and literature sources either reflecting or providing insights into national sentiments regarding the issues of missile defense, PRC-Taiwan unification, and U.S. foreign policy. From these data, a basis for future behavior is derived and assessed in relation to stated U.S. policy objectives.



Conclusions are then drawn on the implications of this behavior for U.S. strategy and policy.

## **F. ASSUMPTIONS**

This thesis makes three assumptions. First, the term “missile defense” encompasses any system or network of systems designed to engage or destroy an incoming ballistic missile at any stage of its flight path; this includes all sea, land, and air-based versions of missile defense. It is understood that certain types of missile defense are more likely to be shared with Taiwan than others. However, in order to handle the issues surrounding how missile defense might affect the Taiwan dilemma, all conceivable versions of the technology must be included in the discussion.

Second, this thesis precludes the onset of any political changes—foreign and domestic—that might significantly alter current national policy. The premises and conclusions presented in this paper are predicated on Beijing’s staunch adherence to the “one China” policy, Washington’s interest in the preservation of Taiwan’s security, Tokyo’s desire to maintain the status quo, and Taipei’s ambivalence towards reunification and its affinity to rely on the United States for security assurances.

Third, this thesis ignores the possibility of a destabilizing crisis on the Korean peninsula. Recognizing that North Korean instability in many respects overshadows the conduct of U.S. and other national foreign policies, this thesis will address the issue of missile defense in Taiwan under the pretense of relative or temporary stability on the Korean peninsula.



## **II. TAIWAN AND BMD IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

The Taiwan question and the desire for missile defenses in collaboration with Asian partners are two of the most controversial issues facing the United States in East Asia. U.S. intentions to ensure Taiwan's security in the face of a menacing PRC military threat contribute to a larger debate over Taiwan reunification that has saddled Sino-U.S. relations and occupied the minds of U.S. policymakers for over half a century. Taiwan has been a consistent factor in U.S. foreign policy dating back to the Second World War, and the political, strategic, and moral implications of Taiwan's resistance to PRC sovereignty still resonate loudly in U.S. policy.

Over the last fifteen years, regional missile defense has carved an equally significant niche in U.S. foreign policy. Since the early 1990's, the United States has aggressively pursued methods to counter burgeoning theater ballistic missile threats, particularly those emanating from East Asia where U.S. interests, along with the safety of its friends and allies, are directly jeopardized.

Missile defense in Taiwan is an amalgam of these volatile issues that carries implications for the grand scheme of East Asian security. The matter figures prominently in U.S. decision-making and will continue to warrant contemplation as long as Taiwan remains prevalent in U.S. and PRC foreign policies.

### **A. TAIWAN IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

The Taiwan question looms over East-Asian stability, in particular over Sino-U.S. relations. The United States seeks to preserve its long-standing relations with Taiwan without precluding the furtherance of productive social, economic, and security-related ties with the PRC. The issue garners intense scrutiny from various facets of U.S. government intent on perpetuating balance and stability in America's East Asia policy.

#### **1. Background**

The Taiwan question, along with U.S. interest in seeing the matter settled by peaceful measures, is the principal legacy of the 1945-1949 Chinese civil war that took place following the Second World War. The defeat and subsequent expulsion of China's reigning Kuomintang (KMT) regime by communist insurgents spawned competing



claims of legitimacy between the communist People's Republic of China and the Nationalist Republic of China on Taiwan. After an initial period of ambivalence,<sup>4</sup> the United States affirmed its resolute support for the ROC government in Taipei and categorically denounced Beijing's assertion to be the legitimate government of China. This support for Taipei was solidified in 1954 with the creation of the U.S.-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the Cold War provided the context within which Washington and Taipei worked in tandem to implement a Sino-Soviet containment policy in East Asia. Taiwan received over \$5 billion in U.S. financial and military aid during this period,<sup>5</sup> and it served as a valuable strategic outpost in a periphery of anti-communist bastions in East Asia. The existence and viability of the KMT regime facilitated U.S. efforts to pressure and isolate the PRC. Taiwan was a base for subversion and paramilitary operations that were useful in harassing the communist regime, and it could be counted on as a stronghold from which U.S. naval and air power could be employed in a time of war.<sup>6</sup>

However, ambitions to constrain Beijing and undermine its legitimacy did not encroach upon U.S. desires to circumvent a military confrontation with the PRC. The United States was particularly wary that the instigation of hostilities—be it a result of ROC brashness or U.S. intimidation—might activate the 1950 Sino-Soviet treaty and inadvertently kindle a U.S.-Soviet clash. In order to avoid a major conflict in the Taiwan Strait, the United States implemented stringent policies designed to pacify Taipei's desires to reclaim the mainland through force and conducted robust displays of military muscle to sour Beijing's own military aspirations against Taiwan. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the United States refrained from sponsoring a Nationalist invasion of the

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<sup>4</sup> There was considerable debate within the United States over whether or not Taiwan merited U.S. attention. The onset of the Korean War helped solidify Washington's decision to lend its support to Taipei instead of Beijing. See David Finkelstein, *Washington's Taiwan Dilemma, 1949-1950*, (Fairfax: George Mason University Press, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> Kerry Dumbaugh, "Taiwan: Recent Developments and U.S. Policy Choices," *Issue Brief for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, 1 April 2003, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> John Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*, (Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall, 1993), p. 51.



mainland, reasoning that such a venture would conflict with overriding U.S. interests.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, the United States twice spoiled PRC attempts to conclude the “liberation of Taiwan” when it deployed sizeable naval task forces to the Taiwan Strait in 1954 and again in 1958.

In the early 1970s, a sense of urgency befell the United States to pursue alternative approaches to counter-balancing the Soviet Union, prompting Washington to seek dialogue and security cooperation with Beijing. Spurred by President Richard Nixon’s visit to Shanghai in 1972, as well as the 1969 “Nixon Doctrine” dictating the reapportionment of U.S. forces in Asia, Washington and Beijing signed the U.S.-PRC Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations, the United States acknowledges Beijing’s ‘One China’ policy, but also reserves the right to maintain “cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.” On January 1, 1979, the United States normalized its relations with the PRC, officially transferring its diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing. The conditions of the Sino-U.S. normalization required the extraction of all U.S. troops from Taiwan and the abrogation of the U.S.-ROC defense treaty, but in the December 15, 1978 normalization communiqué, the United States professed that it “continues to have an interest in the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue and expects that the Taiwan issue will be settled peacefully by the Chinese themselves.”

For many in Washington, the forfeiture of relations with Taiwan was an excessive price to pay for warmer relations with the PRC. In particular, President Jimmy Carter’s decision to annul the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty provoked concerns in Congress that the United States was leaving Taiwan dangerously susceptible to PRC military ambitions.<sup>8</sup> Washington legislators affirmed that the United States “continues to have an interest in the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue,”<sup>9</sup> and in April 1979, Congress

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<sup>7</sup> U.S. officials calculated that a KMT instigated war with China would lack critical European and U.S. public support, and would undermine efforts to drive a wedge between Beijing and Moscow. See John Garver, pp. 279-281.

<sup>8</sup> Congressional leaders were also upset that the agreement may have been negotiated in secret. See Andrew Nathan and Robert Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China’s Search for Security*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), pp. 66-67.

<sup>9</sup> Kerry Dumbaugh, p. 2.



ratified the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), which professes U.S. concern for Taiwan's security and sanctions the continued sale of "arms of a defensive character" to Taiwan.

In July 1982, President Ronald Reagan (a renowned Taiwan sympathizer) further bolstered America's commitment to Taiwan's security by extending the "six assurances" to Taiwan. Under its auspices, the United States forswears that it will not:

1. Designate an end date for arms sales to Taiwan;
2. Alter the TRA;
3. Confer with China prior to arms sales decisions;
4. Interfere with Taipei-Beijing negotiations;
5. Alter its stance on ROC sovereignty or pressure it into negotiations; or
6. Acknowledge Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan.<sup>10</sup>

On August 17, 1982, Washington and Beijing issued a third joint communiqué that deals explicitly with the Taiwan arms question. The document reiterated U.S. compliance with the 'One China' policy and cited U.S. intentions to diminish gradually the quality and quantity of arms sales to Taiwan, contingent on the PRC's "fundamental policy" to provide a "peacefully solution for the Taiwan question."<sup>11</sup>

U.S. strategic interests in Taiwan initially subsided following the 1982 communiqué, but relations between the two sides began to strengthen with the gradual democratization of the KMT regime during the 1980s and 1990s. In 1987 the KMT officially ended 40 years of martial law and lifted restrictions on opposition parties and the publication of newspapers. Even more significantly, a move towards free elections marked the end of KMT political dominance.<sup>12</sup>

The 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre helped bring U.S. policy on Taiwan into even sharper focus. The shock of the PRC's harsh repression of human rights and democratic development, particularly in the context of what many in the United States had viewed as a gradual process of reform in China, produced a stark contrast with Taiwan and further galvanized pro-Taiwan sentiment in the United States.

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<sup>10</sup> The Six Assurances to Taiwan may be viewed at <[www.taiwandocuments.org/assurances.htm](http://www.taiwandocuments.org/assurances.htm)>.

<sup>11</sup> See Nathan and Ross, p. 58.

<sup>12</sup> Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), pp. 714-715.



During the 1990s, the Taiwan question began to reassume greater pertinence in U.S. security calculations. In 1995, the Clinton administration issued a travel visa to ROC President Lee Teng-hui on occasion of his visit to his alma mater at Cornell University.<sup>13</sup> The decision evoked scathing criticism from Beijing and precipitated a bellicose response in the form of three rounds of military exercises, the second of which coincided with Taiwanese Legislative Yuan elections in 1995 and the third in conjunction with Taiwan's presidential elections in March 1996. Washington responded to these sets of exercises by transiting the *USS Nimitz* battle group through the strait in December 1995, and in March 1996 by diverting *Nimitz* from the Arabian Gulf to join the *USS Independence* in the vicinity, constituting the region's most robust U.S. naval presence since the 1950s.<sup>14</sup>

Towards the end of the decade, the United States further began to codify its security commitments to Taiwan. In April 1996, in partial response to the PRC's military exercises, the United States and Japan reconfigured the guidelines of their security treaty to include "situations that arise in areas surrounding Japan," a condition interpreted by many to encompass the Taiwan Strait.<sup>15</sup> In 1999, a U.S. House committee passed the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TSEA) as a means for U.S. officials to address "delays, denials, and reductions" in U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. The bill called for consultations between the State and Defense departments to develop plans for operational training and exchanges of armed forces personnel—up to and including general and flag officers—between the United States and Taiwan for work in threat analysis, doctrine, force planning, operational methods, and other areas. It also authorized the President to make available for sale theater missile defense systems and equipment, including ground and naval-based systems, and reconnaissance and communications systems for targeting and cueing.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The decision came as a result of Congressional pressure on President Clinton, described as "one of the most sophisticated operations to influence foreign policy in recent memory." See Richard Bush, "Taiwan Policy Making Since Tiananmen," in Ramon Myers, Michel Oksenberg, and David Shambaugh, eds., *Making China Policy* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), p. 187.

<sup>14</sup> Douglass Porch, "The Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1996: Strategic Implications for the United States Navy," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 52, No. 3, (Summer 1999), p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Green, *Japan's Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 90-92.

<sup>16</sup> See text of Taiwan Security Enhancement Act, <[www.taiwandocuments.org/sres693.htm](http://www.taiwandocuments.org/sres693.htm)>.



## **2. Contemporary Context of U.S.-ROC Relations**

The United States devotes itself to preserving Taiwan's security as a matter of legal obligation and national interest. The TRA's mandate for U.S. provisions for an effective defense capability in Taiwan serves American interests by facilitating intra-regional dialogue, thereby contributing to stability in East Asia.<sup>17</sup>

The contemporary relationship between the United States and Taiwan can be characterized into four principle elements: the arms sales process, unofficial government relations through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), military-to-military cooperation, and political interaction via non-governmental forums.<sup>18</sup> These relationships must also be considered within the ambiguous context that Washington maintains in order to disguise the level of U.S. involvement in the resolution of the Taiwan question.

### ***a. Arms Sales***

Arms sales play a particularly important role in defining the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. They have endured for decades as the primary form of U.S. support for Taipei. Stipulations for U.S. arms sales to Taiwan are delineated in the TRA, which authorizes the President and Congress to carry out transactions deemed essential to Taiwan's defense. The "six assurances" reinforce these provisions by qualifying the conveyed intentions of the 1982 joint communiqué to decrease the level of arms sold to Taiwan. Between 1980 and 2001, arms sales agreements to Taiwan totaled \$15.940 billion.<sup>19</sup> During this time, Taiwan procured a variety of systems, including F-16 fighters, M-60A tanks, Knox-class frigates, and Patriot Missile Systems, all of which have helped uphold Taiwan's defense capability.

Years of bilateral arms sales talks led to an evolution in the entire process. What had begun as an informal method grew more formalized, growing into an annual

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<sup>17</sup> "Executive Summary of Report to Congress on Implementation of the Taiwan Relations Act," *DefenseLink*, 18 December 2000, <[www.defenselink.mil/pubs/twstrait\\_12182000.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/twstrait_12182000.html)>, 25 July 2003.

<sup>18</sup> James Mulvenon and Michael Swaine, *Taiwan's Foreign and Defense Policies: Features and Determinants*, (Santa Monica: Rand, 2001), pp. 152-160.

<sup>19</sup> *Arms Control Today*, January 2003, <<http://www.armscontrol.org/pdf/taiwanarms.pdf>>, 17 July 2003.



round of talks—usually held in April—between U.S. and ROC officials.<sup>20</sup> In 2001, President Bush announced that he would abandon the traditional arms review process, desiring instead to consider Taiwan’s defense needs on an “as needed basis.” In September 2002, the President signed the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, characterizing Taiwan as a “major non-NATO ally” and officially de-formalizing the arms sales process.

***b. Military-to-Military Cooperation***

Washington deems the upgrading and reorganization of Taiwan’s defense infrastructure imperative for the island’s survival, and it therefore uses unofficial military-to-military cooperation as a means to upgrade the inner workings of Taiwan’s defense infrastructure. U.S.-ROC military cooperation began in earnest in 1999 pursuant to the TSEA; in recent years, the United States has undertaken efforts to improve the quality of Taiwan’s defense apparatus in such areas as command and control, communications, early warning, information warfare, training, and logistics. Under the “Lecheng” plan implemented in the late 1990s, U.S. military personnel performed evaluations on the combat capabilities of Taiwan’s army, naval, and air forces to enhance ROC preparation for a PRC military action.<sup>21</sup> The United States is also exploring ways to reform Taiwan’s military command and administrative structure to facilitate the employment of Taiwan’s various military assets.

***c. The American Institute in Taiwan***

The American Institute in Taiwan was established by the TRA in 1979 as a mechanism through which the United States can conduct unofficial relations with Taiwan. Its counterpart in the United States was the Coordination Council for North American Affairs (later renamed the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office). The AIT is a non-profit, private enterprise that receives funding from State and Defense departments. In addition to its social, political, and economic roles, the AIT

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<sup>20</sup> See Shirley Kan, “Taiwan: Annual Arms Sales Process,” *CRS Report for Congress*, 5 June 2001, pp. 1-2.

<sup>21</sup> Lu Chao-lung, “Is Taiwan-U.S. Joint Military Exercise Easier Said Than Done?” *Taipei Chung-Kuo Shih-Pao*, 18 July 2001, in FBIS.



oversees the military sales procedure, organizing and participating in the annual arms sales process.<sup>22</sup>

***d. Political Influence***

Although formal political relations are prohibited by the joint communiqués, U.S. legislators routinely deal with Taiwan lobbyists attempting to strengthen Taiwan's position in U.S. foreign policy. In the past, the Taiwan lobby has enjoyed a powerful role in U.S. politics, successfully coaxing support from key politicians in order to levy pressure on U.S. policy-makers. Through an enticing amalgam of all-expense paid trips to Taipei, luxurious dinners, and extravagant gifts, the Taiwan lobby exerted a potent influence on legislators.<sup>23</sup> Contemporary versions of the Taiwan lobby are diffused among the myriad special interests with which Congress must deal, and therefore carry less weight, but it still contributes to the policy-making process. The Taiwan lobby is downplayed in the United States, but it is highly scrutinized in PRC media, and equally valued in Taiwan.

***e. Strategic Ambiguity***

The context within which U.S.-ROC relations (and to a degree U.S.-PRC relations) operate is founded on the unpredictability of U.S. involvement in a strait crisis, a concept popularly termed "strategic ambiguity." Neither Beijing nor Taipei can determine with complete confidence if and how U.S. intervention might take place in the event of a cross-strait conflict. The United States parlays this uncertainty into an effective means of deterrence that helps mitigate an onset of hostilities that could result from inflammatory behavior by either the PRC or the ROC.

The U.S. brand of strategic ambiguity is comprised of three distinct aspects. First, Washington harbors an unqualified commitment to help maintain Taiwan's security, neither affirming nor renouncing its intentions to support Taiwan in the event of a PRC attack. Second, the United States, in accordance with the TRA, sells military weapons and equipment to Taiwan in an attempt to bolster the island's self-defense capabilities. Third, the United States abides by an inherently ambiguous "one

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<sup>22</sup> The AIT's role in missile defense is less intensive than in other areas due to the State Department's desire to prevent any upset in the status quo. Instead, AIT officials simply provide information and source documents to Taiwan officials to facilitate their decision-making. See Mulvenon and Swaine, p. 152.

<sup>23</sup> Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), pp. 187-88.



China” policy in which the U.S. definition of “China” is not clear, thus affording Washington with political leeway in its dealings with Beijing.<sup>24</sup> Through its avowal for each of these elements, the United States manages to implement a deliberately ambiguous policy that affords it with the necessary flexibility to respond to circumstances within the Taiwan Strait while simultaneously catering to U.S. interests.

Strategic ambiguity figures prominently in the delivery of BMD to Taiwan since such a transaction is likely to alter perceptions on both sides of the strait with respects to U.S. intentions. Whenever possible, Washington tries to couch its actions within the parameters of its nebulous Taiwan policy. However, the possibility exists that missile defense might compromise this strategic middle ground fueling Chinese or Taiwanese beliefs that the United States is more firmly committed to Taiwan, and subsequently to Taiwan independence.

## **B. MISSILE DEFENSE IN U.S. EAST ASIA POLICY**

The primacy of East Asian missile defenses in U.S. policy results from the profound change in how the United States conceptualizes the global strategic environment in the post-Cold War era. Several trends took place during the late 1980s and 1990s that altered U.S. threat perceptions and catapulted missile defense to the forefront of U.S. strategic concerns.

The most pervasive change to which the United States had to adjust was the termination of the Cold War. The dissolution of the Soviet Union necessitated a radical shift in U.S. strategy with respect to ballistic missile defenses; the elimination of the only viable counterbalance to U.S. military power sullied the perceived need for a grand “Star Wars” missile defense system as conceived during the Reagan administration, and instead prompted the United States to place greater emphasis on the attempts of smaller, regional countries to acquire nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the missiles used to deliver them.

With these momentous changes in the international environment transpired a precipitous increase in U.S. concern over regional ballistic missile threats. In particular,

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<sup>24</sup> Pan Zhongqi, “The Dilemma of Deterrence: US Strategic Ambiguity Policy and its Implications for the Taiwan Strait,” *The Henry L. Stimson Center*, 2001, pp. ii-iii.



the 1991 Gulf War demonstrated the predominance of theater ballistic missiles and the dangers they pose to U.S. friends, allies, and servicemen stationed abroad. The immediacy of the theater missile threat in the Gulf War was sufficient to convince the United States that such weapon systems, in the hands of dissatisfied regional countries, would comprise the crux of America's future security challenge, and therefore merited greater attention in U.S. global strategy. Furthermore, the perceived efficacy of the Patriot missile system in intercepting Iraqi Scud missiles<sup>25</sup> energized American beliefs that BMD technology could productively contribute to the protection of U.S. territories and assets. On December 5 1991, President George H.W. Bush signed the Missile Defense Act of 1991 which delineated U.S. goals to "provide highly effective theater missile defenses to forward deployed and expeditionary elements...and to friends and allies of the United States."

With missile defense technically feasible in the minds of U.S. military planners, the BMD concept began to gain expanded relevance as a result of disturbing trends in East Asia throughout the 1990s. An upsurge of ballistic missile threats in the region convinced the United States that these weapons jeopardize regional peace and stability, and subsequently added impetus for the incorporation of U.S. friends and allies in missile defense plans. During its military exercises between 1995 and 1996, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) launched a total of ten *Dong Feng 15* (DF-15/M-9) missiles in Taiwan's vicinity, the latter salvos impacting a mere 20 miles off Taiwan's coast. In August 1998, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) test fired a Taepodong-1 missile that overflowed Japan and triggered immediate concern from Japanese security planners. These incidents were interspersed with reports that China's PLA was amassing hundreds of short and medium-range ballistic missiles in provinces proximate

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<sup>25</sup> Patriot's performance in the 1991 Gulf War was at first drastically overrated, with some initial reports suggesting that 51 of 52 Scud missiles had been intercepted. Although subsequent U.S. and Israeli investigations disproved this, the initial perception of Patriot's effectiveness was enough to popularize BMD as a viable concept. See "A Brief History of Ballistic Missile Defense," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, <[www.ceip.org/programs/npp/bmdhistory.htm](http://www.ceip.org/programs/npp/bmdhistory.htm)>, 10 August 2003; and "GAO Report: Operation Desert Storm Data Does not Exist to Conclusively Say How Well Patriot Performed," September 1992, <[www.fas.org/spp/starwars/gao/b250335.htm](http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/gao/b250335.htm)>, 10 August 2003.



to Taiwan. By the late 1990s, U.S. defense officials estimated that the PRC had the capability to produce as many as 1,000 ballistic missiles over the next ten years.<sup>26</sup>

The culmination of these factors kindled Congressional support for missile defenses in East Asia. In 1997 the House of Representatives passed the U.S.-Taiwan Anti-Ballistic Missile Defense Cooperation Act, directing the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress on feasible East Asia missile defense architectures capable of protecting Taiwan, and cooperative measures to provide Taiwan with missile defense systems. The bill also stated that the inclusion of Taiwan into a ballistic missile defense system incorporating other friendly and allied nations was within U.S. national interests.<sup>27</sup> The National Missile Defense Act of 1999 solidified U.S. commitment to field an effective ballistic missile deterrent at the earliest feasible juncture, and in May 2003, the Bush administration announced its intentions to field by 2004 a comprehensive missile defense system—consisting of ground-based interceptors, sea-based interceptors, additional Patriot units, and land, sea, and space-based sensors—that is capable of protecting U.S. interests, friends, and allies.<sup>28</sup>

### **C. U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE IN TAIWAN'S SECURITY**

The PRC's threatened use of ballistic missiles in a prospective conflict over Taiwan has generated a sense of exigency in Washington and Taipei to conceive of some option that would diminish Taiwan's susceptibility to mainland coercion with ballistic missiles. China has continued its development and deployment of short and medium range ballistic missiles at an alarming rate, spurring officials in Taipei to consider new and sometimes imaginative methods of self-defense.

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<sup>26</sup> Mark Stokes, "China's Military Space and Conventional Theater Missile Development," in Susan Puska, *People's Liberation Army after Next*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2000), p. 119, in reference to a 1997 Report to Congress Pursuant to Section 1305 of the FY97 National Defense Authorization Act.

<sup>27</sup> The Senate did not pass this bill.

<sup>28</sup> "National Policy on Ballistic Missile Defense Fact Sheet," *The White House*, 20 May 2003, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030520-15.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030520-15.html)>, 31 May 2003.



## **1. PRC Missile Threat<sup>29</sup>**

U.S. military officials concede that PRC ballistic missiles constitute the most “significant...coercive threat to Taiwan.”<sup>30</sup> The sheer proximity of Taiwan to China enhances PRC theater missile options and worsens Taiwan’s ability to counter them. The PRC has an estimated 450 CSS-6 and CSS-7 short-range missiles within strike range of Taiwan, an increase from the 2002 total by approximately 100 missiles.<sup>31</sup> Pentagon officials estimate that China’s missile forces are growing by 75 new missiles a year, and will reach 600 total by 2005.<sup>32</sup>

The principal missile threat is the PRC’s short and medium-range ballistic missiles, the DF-15 SRBM, the DF-11 SRBM, and the DF-21 MRBM.

### **a. DF-15 (CSS-6/M-9)**

The DF-15 is similar in appearance to the U.S. Pershing I-A system, and is considered the mainstay of China’s sub-strategic missile force. It is a medium-range, road mobile, solid-fueled missile that incorporates a single warhead. DF-15 production began in 1984, and it was first test flown in June 1988; development was completed in 1990.

The DF-15 was originally designed for an HE warhead, but is now believed to accommodate a nuclear warhead with a yield of approximately 90 kT, though some reports speculate that the missile can be fitted with a 150 kT warhead. It is also believed that the Chinese have developed chemical, submunition, and fuel-air explosive warheads for use with the missile. The DF-15 has a reported minimum range of 50 to

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<sup>29</sup> Data compiled for this section was taken from a variety of sources: *Jane’s Strategic Weapons Systems* <[www.janes.com/](http://www.janes.com/)> provided technical specifications, testing histories, ranges, payload data, and some Circular Error of Probability (CEP) estimates; editions of the International Institute for Strategic Studies’ *The Military Balance*, Oxford University Press provided missile numbers; The Federation of American Scientists <[www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/theater/df-11.htm](http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/theater/df-11.htm)> provided technical specifications and testing histories; the Monterey Institute of International Studies Center For Nonproliferation Studies <[cns.miis.edu/research/china/coxrep/wbmdat.htm](http://cns.miis.edu/research/china/coxrep/wbmdat.htm)> was used for range and payload data and estimated CEPs; and the Center for Defence and International Security Studies <[www.cdis.org](http://www.cdis.org)> provided range and payload data.

<sup>30</sup> Partial quote from Mark Stokes found in *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 33, Issue 5, June 2003, p. 46.

<sup>31</sup> This is also double the previous anticipated annual augmentation rate of 50 missiles. See Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough, “Nation; Inside the Ring: Missile Threat,” *The Washington Times*, 4 July 2003, p. A05.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.



200 km and a maximum range of 600 kilometers, although some sources claim that the missile's maximum range can be increased to 800 km or decreased to 400 km depending on adjustments made to its 500 kg warhead.<sup>33</sup> Unclassified CEP reports vary for this missile, ranging from less than 100 m up to 600 m, but figures suggesting a 280 to 300 m CEP are considered most accurate. Operational preparation time is estimated at less than 30 minutes.

The DF-15 comes equipped with a strapdown inertial guidance system on the warhead that guides the missile's trajectory through the use of small thrusters. During flight, the missile body is designed to lag behind the warhead, rendering it a much smaller target and complicating missile defense radar tracking, engagement, and interception.<sup>34</sup>

A modified version of the missile, designated DF-15A (CSS-6 mod 2), was reportedly developed in 1996 and is thought to feature an electromagnetic pulse warhead option among its selectable ordnance types. It also features a ring-laser gyroscopic inertial-guidance system, coupled to an upgraded on-board computer system as part of a terminal guidance package. These enhancements, along with the purported incorporation of a radar proximity fuse, supposedly reduce the missile's CEP to 30-45 m. The missile's terminal velocity is estimated in excess of Mach 6, making it conducive to deep penetration strikes against underground fortifications. This reentry speed also helps counter lower-tier missile defense systems and facilitates the targeting of Taiwan from further distances.<sup>35</sup>

The DF-15 has been operational since 1995, with an initial force deployment totaling 40 missiles. By 1999, around 200 missiles had reportedly been deployed, with an anticipated addition of 50 missiles per year that would give the PRC a total of 600 by 2005. Main bases are located at Leping and Xang Rau in Jiangxi province, at Jiangshan in Zhejiang province, and at Xau Wu and Yongau in Fujian

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<sup>33</sup> Reducing the warhead size from 500 kg to 320 kg purportedly gives the missile an 800 km range. Likewise, a 750 kg warhead might reduce the range to 400 km.

<sup>34</sup> Mark Stokes, "China's Military Space and Conventional Theater Missile Development," p. 120.

<sup>35</sup> Shirley Kan, "China: Ballistic and Cruise Missiles," *CRS Report for Congress*, 10 August 2000, p. 12, citing Mark Stokes, September 1999.



province. The PLA, as of 2000, had one regiment-sized unit deployed in southeastern China. During its missile tests in 1995, the PLA launched six DF-15 missiles into the sea near Taiwan, one of which experienced an in-flight failure. In 1996, China launched four more missiles. These launches demonstrated that China's missiles were in general more accurate than previously expected.

***b. DF-11 (CSS-7/M-11)***

The DF-11 is a short range, solid-fueled, single warhead ballistic missile with external dimensions and an electrical interface similar to the SS-1 Scud B missile. The missile is in fact interchangeable with the SS-1 Scud B missile and can be modified to fit in the former Soviet MAZ 543 TEL.

The export version was originally fitted with an HE warhead, but the domestic DF-11 version is purported to accommodate an optional nuclear warhead with selectable yields of 2, 10, or 20 kT,<sup>36</sup> in addition to submunition, fuel-air explosive, and chemical warheads. Some sources credit the DF-11 with a 150 m CEP.<sup>37</sup> The 800 kg warhead supposedly reduces the missile's range to 280 to 300 km,<sup>38</sup> just below Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) regulations, although, according to some U.S. reports, the domestic version adopted by the PLA has a longer range of roughly 350 km. Like the DF-15, operational preparation time for the DF-11 is short—30-45 minutes.

It is likely that the warhead assembly for this missile separates during flight, and is either stabilized or maneuvered by four small fins located at the warhead's rear section, suggesting that the warhead may have terminal guidance. The missile has an inertial platform for guidance, and is controlled during the boost phase either by vanes in the exhaust or small vernier motors. The DF-11 is believed to incorporate a terminal guidance system similar to that used on the DF-15, employing a miniature propulsion system to adjust the warhead's attitude and trajectory after separation from the carrier vehicle.

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<sup>36</sup> Data on the DF-11 yield differ dramatically; CNS credits the DF-11 with a 350 kT yield.

<sup>37</sup> See Mark Stokes, "China's Military Space and Conventional Theater Missile Development," p. 120.

<sup>38</sup> This contradicts China's previously publicized specifications suggesting a 500 kg warhead with minimum and maximum ranges of 120km and 300 km. Both figures may be correct depending on warhead/fuel ratios and MTCR work-arounds. See *Jane's Strategic Weapons*.



The modified DF-11A (CSS-7 Mod 2) is reported to have a payload of 500 kg, a 200 m CEP, and a maximum range of 350 km. U.S. reports suggest a maximum range between 400 and 530 km. This modified version has a smaller warhead assembly, with likely GPS updates to improve terminal flight accuracy. Another version of this missile might be fitted with INS/GPS and an optical correlation terminal guidance system, supposedly lowering the missile's CEP to 20 to 30 m. The DF-11 has an estimated flight time of three minutes, which poses challenges to missile defense systems. Furthermore, because the DF-11 remains in the atmosphere throughout its flight, most upper-tier missile defense systems are unable to engage the missile.<sup>39</sup>

The DF-11 was first flight tested in 1990, and was introduced into service in 1992; the DF-11A was introduced around 1998. U.S. reports estimated in 1999 that China had deployed 40 DF-11's, with a targeted goal of 500 missiles by 2005. The missiles are produced at the Sanjiang Missile Group in Yuanan, and main bases are located at Yongan and Xianyou in Fujian province. China reportedly possesses several hundred DF-11's and DF-15's, the majority located in southeast China.

*c. DF-21 (CSS-5)*

The DF-21 is China's first truly road-mobile missile.<sup>40</sup> It is a medium-range, two-stage, solid-fueled, single warhead ballistic missile that is a variant of the CSS-N-3 (JL-1) submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), and is a replacement tactical nuclear missile for the CSS-1 (DF-2). The first successful test flight occurred in 1985, with the missile entering operational status in 1987 and reaching deployment status in 1991.

The DF-21 is capable of carrying a 600 kg nuclear warhead with a yield between 200 and 300 kT, though some reports claim that a modified version is capable of carrying a 500 kT warhead. It is also believed that alternative chemical and submunition warheads are available. Its CEP is estimated between 300 and 400m, but some figures go as high as 700 m. The DF-21 has a 600 km minimum range and an estimated maximum range between 1,800 and 2,150 km. Its guidance package consists of a gyro-platform

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<sup>39</sup> Mark Stokes, "China's Military Space and Conventional Theater Missile Development," p. 120.

<sup>40</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 14.



inertial guidance with an onboard computer. As with other DF-class missiles, the DF-21 is launched from a transport erector launcher (TEL), although the DF-21 is unique in that it is cold launched, with motor ignition occurring after launch when the missile is about 20 m above the launch vehicle. Separate logistics and command vehicles provide for the missile's testing and targeting functions, creating a veritable convoy of support vehicles consisting of a command vehicle, a logistics support vehicle, a reload vehicle, and three TEL vehicles.

The PRC has also developed a conventional version of the DF-21 that may have been deployed in the late 1990s and is designed to fulfill the role of the discontinued DF-25.<sup>41</sup> The DF-21A (CSS-5 Mod 2) is longer and heavier than the original version, and is said to be comparable with the U.S. Pershing II IRBM. Whereas a poor CEP confined the original version to nuclear missions, the DF-21A is believed to fire a nuclear warhead, reportedly with selectable yield options of 20, 90, and 150 kT, and a heavy, conventional warhead that can vary between chemical, submunitions, HE, and EMP options. The DF-21A has a minimum range of 500 km and an improved maximum range between 1,800 and 2,500 km. It reportedly also has GPS updates and a radar correlation terminal guidance system that gives the missile a 50 m CEP.

The Chinese are believed to have produced in 50-100 DF-21 missiles, all of them deployed to Shuxiong, Datong, Jianshui, Lianxiwang, Tai-hai mountain range, and Tonghua. Those deployed along China's southern and northwestern borders have been reconfigured with conventional warheads. From these locations, the missiles can reach multiple targets in Asia, including Taiwan and Japan. A news report citing a classified National Air Intelligence Center (NAIC) report claims that CSS-2/DF-3A launchers have been converted to launch the DF-21 to target Taiwan from Lianxiwang, located in Anhui province approximately 450 miles from Taiwan.<sup>42</sup> Deployments are thought to be limited to areas closer to China's borders to ensure adequate target coverage of areas previously covered by the DF-3.

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<sup>41</sup> Shirley Kan, "China: Ballistic and Cruise Missiles," p. 10; and Swaine with Runyon, p. 15.

<sup>42</sup> Kan, "China: Ballistic and Cruise Missiles," p. 10.



**d. *Missile Developments and Countermeasures***

Taiwan's ability to cope with these missile threats is complicated by PLA intentions to implement tactics and technology that will enhance missile survivability and mitigate the effectiveness of any missile defense systems.

The PLA is believed to possess the requisite expertise to equip its ballistic missiles with multiple reentry vehicles (MRV) and multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRV). MIRVed warheads carry ten to twelve separate warheads, enabling a single ballistic missile to strike multiple targets. In February 2003, the PLA reportedly launched a DF-21 missile that incorporated a MIRVed warhead.<sup>43</sup> This was the latest in a long line of MIRVed flight tests dating back to the early 1980s. A capability of this sort is worrisome to defense planners in Washington and Taipei since it significantly betters PRC chances that it can soundly defeat a missile defense network in Taiwan.

In addition, the PLA seeks to employ various missile defense countermeasures and penetration aids that will overwhelm, outsmart, or outmaneuver any missile defense system it encounters. Among the assortment of measures and mechanisms potentially available to the PLA are maneuvering reentry vehicles (MARV), electronic onboard countermeasures, laser cladding, multi-axis attacks, depressed trajectories, and saturation attacks.<sup>44</sup>

**2. *Missile Defense Options***<sup>45</sup>

The United States intends to deploy several advanced land, sea, and air-based missile defense capabilities as part of a layered defense (defense in depth) strategy.<sup>46</sup> The goal is to establish a multi-tiered missile defense with higher kill probabilities and

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<sup>43</sup> Hiroyuki Sugiyama, "China Tests Multiple-Warhead Missiles; New ICBMs to be Deployed," *The Daily Yomiuri*, 7 February 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>44</sup> See Mark Stokes, "China's Military Space and Conventional Theater Missile Development," pp. 124-126.

<sup>45</sup> In 2002, the Bush Administration removed the distinction between "national" and "theater" ballistic missile defense, joining the two concepts under a collective "missile defense" program. This consolidation makes it easier for defense planners to think about missile defense in terms of layered defense, wherein a properly operating missile defense network is able to destroy a ballistic missile in its boost, midcourse, or terminal phases flight.

<sup>46</sup> Department of Defense, "Report to Congress on Theater Missile Defense Architecture Options for the Asia-Pacific Region," 4 May 1999, p. 2.



lower resource usage that provides coverage against a sizable inventory of short and medium range missiles.<sup>47</sup> Layered missile defenses increase the likelihood of successful intercept by generating multiple engagement opportunities, creating complicating factors to which an adversary must adjust, and helping negate the effectiveness of ballistic missile countermeasures. Although layered missile defense is considered effective against limited attacks, it is unlikely to achieve 100 percent probability of kill.

U.S. missile defense systems are broken into two categories, lower-tier and upper-tier. Lower-tier systems comprise those missile defenses designed to target and intercept ballistic missiles whose apogee occurs within the atmosphere. Because intercept will not occur until the missile's final phase of flight, these systems are intended to provide point defense against any missiles not intercepted by established upper-tier or boost phase systems.<sup>48</sup> The PATRIOT Advanced Capability 3 is America's most renowned lower-tier system. Development of a lower sea-based Navy Area Defense system had been in progress prior to the Pentagon's 2001 decision to cut the program due to cost overruns and poor equipment performances.

Upper-tier missile defenses intercept ballistic missiles whose apogee occurs outside the atmosphere during the boost and mid-course phase of flight. Upper-tier systems under development include Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense, and the Airborne Laser (ABL)

Options available for implementation in a Taiwan based missile defense system include PAC-3, THAAD, and Aegis BMD.

*a. PATRIOT Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3)*

PAC-3 is a land-based, lower-tier system designed to provide area and point defense against short and medium-range ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and aircraft. The baseline model was designed to undergo periodic modifications that would enable the system to handle evolving missile threats. The current version is designed to defend for several tens of kilometers beyond the launch point.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Statement of General Joseph W. Ralston, Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the Senate Armed services Committee, 2 October 1998, <[www.fas.org/spp/starwars/congress/1998\\_h/981002jr.htm](http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/congress/1998_h/981002jr.htm)>, 28 July 2003.

<sup>49</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 55.



Components of the PAC-3 system include a radar set, an engagement control station (ECS), eight launch stations, and interceptor missiles. The system comes equipped with enhanced radar, communications, and software systems that provide greater accuracy and maneuverability.<sup>50</sup> The PAC-3 also enables the control of a greater number of interceptors, and facilitates system interoperability. And unlike its predecessor, which used an exploding warhead to destroy an airborne missile, the PAC-3 relies on hit-to-kill technology.

PAC-3 was used extensively during American operations in Iraq in 2003, frequently with satisfactory results. The system's success has bolstered hopes for future missile defense deployments abroad, and has become a favored system for sale and export to U.S.-friendly nations and Taiwan.

***b. Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)***

THAAD is a land-based missile defense system that provides intercept capability against short, medium, and long-range ballistic missiles as they transition from midcourse to terminal stages of flight. The system's ability to engage missiles both within and outside of the atmosphere renders it less susceptible to enemy launched decoys.

THAAD consists of four principal components: a truck mounted launcher that protects, transports, and fires the interceptor; an interceptor that uses hit-to-kill technology; a ground-based radar, surveillance and tracking sensor that communicates with interceptor in-flight; and a command, control, and battle management (C2BM) component that links a specific THAAD system to other missile defense elements as part of the layered defense concept. The system is designed to be highly mobile and possesses a 'shoot-look-shoot' firing doctrine wherein an assessment of the missile intercept can be made in between shots.<sup>51</sup>

THAAD development began in 1992 but encountered a series of setbacks throughout its testing cycle due to myriad failure mechanisms with the missile

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<sup>50</sup> The interceptor's trajectory can be modified during flight using the system's fire-control radar. See *Jane's Land Based Air Defence*, 14 July 2003, <[www.janes.com](http://www.janes.com)>, 28 July 2003.

<sup>51</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 55.



component.<sup>52</sup> Its first skin-to-skin intercept of a ballistic missile target occurred June 10, 1999. Flight tests are expected to resume at White Sands Missile Range in late 2004, and will later transition to the Kauaa Range in Hawaii and the Kwajalein Range in the South Pacific.

*c. Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense*

Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense, a sea-based midcourse program (formerly known as Navy Theater Wide), is arguably the most ambitious missile defense program in the queue for the U.S. military. It is intended to provide an exo-atmospheric intercept capability against medium and long-range ballistic missiles during the boost and midcourse flight phases, although technological upgrades concurrent with the system's development will enable the interception of intermediate-range ballistic missiles by 2006.<sup>53</sup> Future flight tests will reflect the system's ability to intercept missiles with an apogee lower in the exo-atmosphere.

Aegis BMD will function with the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3), which is a Standard Missile 2, Block 4 missile that has undergone software adjustments and has had its warhead and radar seeker replaced with a third stage kick motor plus kinetic kill vehicle (KKV).<sup>54</sup> The program will incorporate this enhanced SM technology with the Aegis Combat System (ACS) employed on TICONDEROGA class Cruisers and ARLEIGH BURKE class Destroyers.

Aegis BMD development proceeds in two-year intervals, during which the program will incrementally receive increased capabilities against ballistic missiles.<sup>55</sup> The first system to be certified for operational deployment, the Aegis BMD Block 2004, is expected to defeat unitary and separating targets, while subsequent Blocks 2006 and 2008 will integrate progressively advanced radar discrimination capabilities.

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<sup>52</sup> Lieutenant General Lester Lyles, Director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Office, News Briefing, 9 July 1998, <[www.fas.org/spp/starwars/program/news98/t07131998\\_t710thad.html](http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/program/news98/t07131998_t710thad.html)>, 28 July 2003.

<sup>53</sup> "Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense," *MDA In-depth*, <[www.acq.osd.mil/bmdo/bmdoling/html/](http://www.acq.osd.mil/bmdo/bmdoling/html/)>, 1 May 2003.

<sup>54</sup> "Navy Theater-Wide Missile Defense," *Boeing*, <[www.boeing.com/defense-space/space/md/ntwmd/](http://www.boeing.com/defense-space/space/md/ntwmd/)>, 28 July 2003.

<sup>55</sup> "Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense."



#### **D. SUMMARY**

Much is open to question concerning the efficacy of these systems against the PRC missile capability. Few labor under the misconception that layered missile defense will service all of Taiwan's defense needs, but many consider the implementation of some type of missile defense a boon for Taiwanese security. It is unlikely that China's ability to coerce Taiwan with missiles will recede in the near future, suggesting that U.S. intervention on Taiwan's behalf is essential. However, it is also imprudent to consider this matter in a vacuum. Much more is at stake for Taiwan and the United States besides the sheer security implications; missile defense in Taiwan stands to have bearings on a wide scope of issues, political, economic, and otherwise. As Washington contemplates the pros and cons of BMD in Taiwan, it must carefully weigh these factors in order to determine if missile defense is compatible with U.S. and ROC interests.



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### **III. REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES**

In order to assess regional perspectives on missile defense in Taiwan and reactions of each regional player to the delivery of missile defense to Taiwan, it is prudent to consider the matter in its elemental components: country relations with and sympathy for Taiwan and national policies concerning Taiwan reunification, and national postures regarding the introduction of missile defense in East Asia. This constellation of outlooks will form the political and strategic context in which the United States must decide how best to proceed with this complicated issue.

#### **A. THE VIEW FROM BEIJING**

For the PRC, missile defense in Taiwan is an uncomfortable corollary to what has been a painstakingly frustrating aspect of its foreign policy. The issue of Taiwan independence already constitutes a pervasive influence on PRC behavior, factoring profusely in the conduct of China's international relations<sup>56</sup> as well as in the formation of PLA strategic doctrine. Therefore, Beijing's rationale regarding Taiwan and missile defense will prove crucial when attempting to determine China's potential reactions.

##### **1. Beijing's Perceptions of Taiwan**

Beijing intensely wishes to reincorporate Taiwan into the PRC's fold, and it is open to virtually any method to do so. Since its conception in 1949, the PRC has yet to renounce its willingness to use force as a means to reunify Taiwan with the mainland. During the 1950s, it twice barraged the offshore islands controlled by Taiwan with artillery rounds in futile attempts to coerce Taipei into submission. In recent years, the PLA has staged multiple exercises in Taiwan's vicinity, including the launch of several MRBMs into the waters adjacent to Taiwan in 1995 and 1996. Today, Beijing continues to amass hundreds of short and medium-range ballistic missiles opposite of Taiwan in hopes of deterring a Taiwanese declaration of independence.

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<sup>56</sup> For instance, Beijing's veto of a 1997 U.N. resolution sanctioning intervention in Kosovo was at least partially due to suspicions that similar political mechanisms might be employed at China's expense on behalf of Taiwan.



To China, Taiwan's separatist tendencies jeopardize cross-strait peace and stability.<sup>57</sup> The PRC refuses to entertain, let alone tolerate, any trend or inclination towards a separate, sovereign Taiwan. Indeed, PRC intolerance for Taiwan's separation has matured to the point that even those actions prolonging reunification, let alone heartening Taiwan independence, are considered unconscionable acts of unfriendliness towards the PRC.

Beijing maintains that Washington uses its support of Taiwan independence as a "trump card" in order to threaten and intimidate the PRC.<sup>58</sup> It accuses the United States of conveniently interpreting the "one China" policy to further its political ambition, and suggests that the United States seeks to militarize Taiwan through the implementation of a "'sub-strategic alliance relationship'," defense collaboration, and joint BMD.<sup>59</sup> China has not forgotten the threat it faced from possible U.S.-supported invasions from the island throughout the 1950's and 1960's, nor has it overlooked the strategic significance of the island's proximity to the Asian mainland.<sup>60</sup> Beijing has no interest in witnessing the establishment of a de facto U.S. outpost a mere 160 kilometers from its shores.

China also considers the reunification with Taiwan to be a matter of national sovereignty, and interprets any outside involvement towards the resolution of the matter as an infringement upon its autonomy.<sup>61</sup> The PRC has already witnessed the return of Hong Kong and Macao, albeit under special sovereignty conditions; Taiwan's separation from the mainland is the last remaining legacy of a century of shame when China's fate was largely determined by foreign nations. Reunification would bring to closure the long and disruptive civil war that marred the nation during the years surrounding the Second World War and close the chapter on China's subservience to the rest of the world.

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<sup>57</sup> 2002 PRC National Defense White Paper, *Xinhua Domestic Service*, 9 December 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>58</sup> Yang Yunzhong, "Some Strategic Reflections on the Main Threats to China's Security in the Early 21st Century," *Dangdai Yatai*, 15 October 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> During the Vietnam War, Taiwan served as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" that was used as a way station to launch air sorties into Vietnam.

<sup>61</sup> The PRC's historical claims to Taiwan are extensive, dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and are delineated in its 2000 White Paper on the One China Principle and the Taiwan Issue, *The Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council*, 21 February 2000, <[www.china-embassy.org/eng/7128.html](http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/7128.html)>, 6 August 2003.



Also at stake is the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) internal legitimacy among its own citizens. The CCP's popularity has steadily waned as civil unrest threatens to boil over in China's countryside and even in Hong Kong. Although the CCP's existence is not predicated on Taiwan's illegitimacy as a lawful regime—as was the case prior to 1991—the government still considers the favorable resolution of the Taiwan question critical to its validity among the Chinese people. A failure to reunify Taiwan with the Mainland could be internally construed as a sign of weakness for China's government, and might expedite the onset of adverse conditions—including worsened tensions in Tibet and Xinjiang Province—that jeopardize the party's autocratic hold on power. Consequently, PRC-ROC reunification assumes foremost priority on China's national agenda.

## **2. Beijing's Perceptions of Missile Defense**

Beijing strongly objects to the development and deployment of any type of missile defense in East Asia, and it resolutely opposes any system deployed in Taiwan. The majority of Beijing's objections to missile defense are political, although there are also importunate concerns over the security implications that missile defense carries with it.

Politically, missile defense fuels Chinese beliefs that the United States wishes to strengthen its military presence in Asia while containing China's emergence as a dominant power in the region.<sup>62</sup> Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the PRC has endured unnerving trends in America's Asia policy, including the respecification of guidelines pertaining to the U.S.-Japan security alliance and the apparent expansion and redefinition of Cold War alliances incorporating Japan and South Korea. China believes these events are a collaboration of actions designed to emplace the United States at the epicenter of a NATO-like alliance structure, the notional composition of which includes Japan, Korea, Australia, parts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and Taiwan.<sup>63</sup> Such a structure, Beijing asserts, unnecessarily strengthens U.S. military

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<sup>62</sup> Greg May, "China's Opposition to TMD is More About Politics than Missiles," *Global Beat*, February 2000, <[www.nyu.edu/globalbeat/usdefense/May0200.html](http://www.nyu.edu/globalbeat/usdefense/May0200.html)>, 8 November 2002.

<sup>63</sup> David Lampton and Greg May, *A Big Power Agenda for East Asia: America, China, and Japan*, (Washington D.C.: The Nixon Center, 2000), p. 46.



alliances in Asia at the expense of neighboring countries.<sup>64</sup> The PRC places little stock in Washington's concerns over North Korean missile proliferation, insisting that the United States merely fabricates a threat from "rogue nations" in order to masquerade its ultimate desires to contain China and establish an "absolute military advantage."<sup>65</sup>

The PRC also worries about the implications missile defense will have for regional stability and security. Beijing believes that actions and trends along this line will even more unfavorably shift the balance of military and nuclear power to the United States; instigate an arms race involving offensive and defensive weapons, not precluding the militarization of space; aggravate global non-proliferation efforts; and bear negative long-term consequences for regional security.<sup>66</sup>

It is particularly anxious over the effects on global arms control efforts and the potential for a regional arms race. In China's estimation, the United States is the primary inhibitor of the international nonproliferation effort, and it fears that adherence to various nonproliferation and arms control guidelines will suffer in consequence. Beijing was sharply critical of Washington's abrogation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, viewing the act as a facilitating step in a U.S. ambition to establish absolute military supremacy at the expense of other nations. China also holds the United States in violation of the Missile Technology Control Regime, citing the ease with which missile defense technology can be reversed engineered to produce missiles with offensive capabilities.<sup>67</sup>

Some Chinese analysts insist that the PRC and Taiwan are already embroiled in a classic arms race fueled by U.S. sales of military hardware to Taiwan.<sup>68</sup> Beijing contends

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<sup>64</sup> "Nation Reiterates Stance on Defence Shields," *China Daily*, 16 May 2001, in Lexis Nexis, November 7, 2002.

<sup>65</sup> "U.S. Arms Control Pull-back Threatens World Peace," *China Daily*, 14 January 2000, in Lexis Nexis. Also see Yang Yunzhong, "Some Strategic Reflections on the Main Threats to China's Security in the Early 21st Century."

<sup>66</sup> Ye Ruan, "Why Has the United States Withdrawn from 'Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty'," *Zhongguo Pinglun*, No. 50, 1 February 2002, pp. 55-57, in FBIS.

<sup>67</sup> Han Tianyang, "Sino-US Controversy over and Cooperation in Missile Control," *Zhongguo Pinglun*, 1 July 2001, in FBIS; and Hou Hongyu, "Who Is Challenging the World Nonproliferation Mechanism?" *Liaowang*, 29 July 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>68</sup> Shi Yinhong, "The Arms Control Mechanism and Nonproliferation Issues in East Asia: Current Status and Dangers," *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, 1 October 2002, in FBIS.



that the BMD deployment in Northeast Asia will further damage prospects of regional stability in the Asia-Pacific region by encouraging the proliferation of advanced missile technologies.<sup>69</sup> In its estimates, the introduction of a missile defense system would significantly heighten the stakes in this “dangerous game” for any participating nation.<sup>70</sup>

*a. Missile Defense in Japan*

China sees a two-fold threat in the implementation of missile defense in Japan. First, as U.S.-Japan cooperation on missile defense research intensifies, the PRC increasingly considers Japan an equal conspirator in the U.S.-led plot to contain China. It views the inherent synergy of joint missile defense cooperation as a ratcheting up of U.S.-Japanese military collusion that could mark the beginning of an East Asian version of NATO targeted against China.<sup>71</sup> The PRC disregards Japan’s supposed explanation for its interest in missile defense—concern over China’s military modernization—as a fraudulent premise for perpetuating the “China threat theory” among other nations.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, China fears that Japan’s inclusion in missile defense will impede the reunification process between the PRC and Taiwan. The expansion of Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) duties to “neighboring areas,” including the Taiwan Strait, raised concerns within the PRC that Japan might play an active role should a strait crisis become reality. Beijing calculates that a missile defense capability among U.S. allies raises the likelihood that Japan would live up to its military guarantee, and thus pose a considerable threat to China’s military security.<sup>73</sup> A particularly nightmarish scenario for Beijing would involve a Japan-based missile defense system that helps nullify China’s coercive leverage over Taiwan, thereby reinforcing the prospect of U.S. military

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<sup>69</sup> 2002 PRC National Defense White Paper.

<sup>70</sup> Zhang Zhengdong, “United States Gets the Cold Shoulder in Lobbying Europe,” *Xinhua Domestic Service*, 14 May 2001, in FBIS.

<sup>71</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 58.

<sup>72</sup> Liang Ming, “‘Defense White Paper’ Reveals Japan’s Military Intentions,” *Liaowang*, 26 August 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>73</sup> Hong Yuan, “The Implication of TMD System in Japan to China’s Security,” *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*, 1998, <[www.nautilus.org/library/security/papers/Hong\\_Yuan-EngISODARCO.PDF](http://www.nautilus.org/library/security/papers/Hong_Yuan-EngISODARCO.PDF)>, 16 January 2003, p. 3.



intervention in the event of hostilities, while enabling Tokyo to exercise more influence over Taipei.<sup>74</sup>

Secondly, Beijing embraces the perception that Japan's incorporation into a missile defense network constitutes a harbinger of further steps towards Japanese offensive remilitarization. Conservative elements in China harbor rather alarmist views of Japanese military intentions, eyeing missile defense as but a facet of Japan's overall effort to enhance its military power.<sup>75</sup> The PRC is still wary of Japan's wartime militarist legacy, and it frequently alludes to the country's historically militaristic behavior as a basis for its concerns about missile defense. China argues that a missile defense program contradicts Japan's longstanding policy entailing abstention from collective security and the forfeiture of its right to assist allies under attack.<sup>76</sup> It also suspects that requisite technology transfers might enable Japan to achieve offensive missile capabilities that would further its inclination towards remilitarization.<sup>77</sup>

***b. Missile Defense in Taiwan***

The PRC is most sensitive to a missile defense architecture that incorporates Taiwan in any capacity. China's principal grievance against providing missile defense for Taiwan is the degree of military collaboration that would be required to implement the program, and the political repercussions of doing so. Beijing posits that missile defense in Taiwan extends beyond the traditional realm of U.S. arms-sales that China has endured for the past two decades. Instead, U.S.-ROC cooperation in areas of command and control, communications, and early-warning, would necessitate a much more intimate relationship between the militaries of both parties. This, in Beijing's eyes, would be representative of a radical shift in Washington's Taiwan policy, and would constitute the reestablishment of a de facto military alliance reminiscent of the 1954 U.S.-

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<sup>74</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 57.

<sup>75</sup> Liang Ming, 55-56.

<sup>76</sup> "Japan-US Missile Defense Program To Go Against Japan's Existing Policy," *Xinhua*, 5 November 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>77</sup> Lampton and May, p. 43.



ROC Mutual Defense Treaty.<sup>78</sup> Such a relationship would reinforce the notion that the United States would assist Taiwan if the PRC were to resort to force, thereby limiting China's leverage vis-à-vis its rogue province and encouraging it to seek independence. Such a degradation of its ability to coerce Taiwan into capitulation would be excessively worrisome for the PRC should it spur subsequent disturbances in politically sensitive regions like Xinjiang province and Tibet.

American missile defense sales to the ROC are also deemed an infringement upon China's sovereignty based on the conditions set forth in the second and third U.S.-China joint communiqués. Missile defense in Taiwan would be the most extensive form of U.S.-Taiwan joint military collaboration since the abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty in 1979. Beijing premises its diplomatic relationship with Washington on adherence to the "One China" policy, and it views U.S.-ROC missile defense cooperation as a challenge to its authority and a serious threat to U.S.-China relations. In addition, BMD sales to Taiwan constitute the most flagrant breach to date of the 1982 joint communiqué. The United States has contradicted the parameters of this agreement on several occasions, the most egregious instance occurring in 1992 when President George H.W. Bush sold 150 F-16's to Taiwan. Even by these standards, however, missile defense sales would embody a dramatic regression in the U.S. upholding of the 1982 communiqué, giving Beijing cause to reevaluate Washington's respect for China's sovereignty.

## **B. THE VIEW FROM TOKYO**

Japan's role in the delivery of missile defense to Taiwan is tangential, but salient nonetheless. As a security partner with the United States and as a player in U.S. BMD ambitions, Japan's views on missile defense and the Taiwan issue will factor considerably in the calculations of Washington, Beijing, and Taipei.

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<sup>78</sup> Henry L. Stimson Center Working Group Report, "Theater Missile Defenses in the Asia-Pacific Region," *The Henry L. Stimson Center*, Report No. 34, June 2000, pp 5-6. Hereafter referred to as the Stimson Center Working Group Report.



## 1. Tokyo's Perceptions of Taiwan

Since 1945, Tokyo has patterned its foreign policy towards Taiwan largely after Washington. Throughout the first three decades of the Cold War, Japan served alongside the United States in supporting the KMT regime on Taiwan while attempting to constrain and delegitimize the PRC. Despite the “shock” of President Nixon’s announcement of Sino-U.S. rapprochement in 1971, Japan concluded its own normalization agreement with China in 1972, the terms of which mirrored Sino-U.S. agreement, calling on Japan to recognize Taiwan as part of China. Through the final years of the Cold War and into the post-Cold War era, Japan upheld the U.S. standard, advocating for the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question while “understanding and respecting” Beijing’s ‘one China’ policy.

Unlike the United States, however, Japan contends with unique circumstances that impel it to perceive the Taiwan question from a slightly altered vantage. Although Japan acknowledges China’s desire to treat the Taiwan issue as an “internal affair,” it is keenly aware that any mishandling of the matter—by either Beijing or Taipei, or other outside observers—may potentially threaten regional peace and stability, and subsequently pose adverse consequences for Japanese vital interests.<sup>79</sup> Given Japan’s proximity to China and the Taiwan Strait, its desire for stable, productive relations with the region’s other preeminent power, and its unwillingness to jeopardize the extensive economic relations it shares with both the PRC and with Taiwan, the maintenance of regional stability assumes much greater import to Tokyo than for Washington. Tokyo’s Taiwan policy seeks to conserve this relative stability by preventing the onset of hostilities within the strait, avoiding an unnecessary provocation of China, and preserving Taiwan’s free-market economy.<sup>80</sup>

Despite these concerns, Japanese diplomats do not wish for progress in Sino-Japanese relations to impede Japan’s informal ties with Taiwan.<sup>81</sup> Small but powerful

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<sup>79</sup> 2002 Japan Defense White Paper, 2 August 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>80</sup> Ted Osius, *The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance: Why It Matters and How to Strengthen It*, (Westport: Praeger, 2002), p. 22.

<sup>81</sup> Barbara Wanner, “Taiwanese Election Creates New Challenges for Japan on Cross-Straits Relations,” *Japan Economic Institute Report*, No. 16, 21 April 2000, <[www.jei.org/Archive/JEIR00/0016f.html](http://www.jei.org/Archive/JEIR00/0016f.html)>.



elements within the Japanese government sympathize with Taiwan and seek to restore and enhance Japan-Taiwan ties. These sentiments are primarily localized among the liberal elements of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), consisting of older diplomats with stronger emotional ties to Taiwan, and pro-KMT hawks well versed in anticommunist doctrine.<sup>82</sup> This group is generally reluctant to forego relations with Taiwan, readily emphasizing Taiwan's democratic virtues while seeking to mitigate Japan's subjection to PRC posturing and intimidation.

The heightened controversy that typically surrounds prospective visits to Japan by former ROC president Lee Teng-hui exemplifies the latent pro-Taiwan undercurrent in Japanese politics. Lee's fluent Japanese-language skills and his insight into Japanese affairs make him a controversial favorite among Japanese lawmakers and foreign policy specialists, several of which are habitually supportive of the former president's visits. During Taiwan's bid to have Lee attend the 1994 Asian games, approximately 110 LDP members signed a petition in support.<sup>83</sup> The excessive pressure levied upon the Mori government to issue a travel visa to Lee Teng-hui in 2000 even more explicitly demonstrated the degree of influence held by Japan's pro-Taiwan contingent. Even former Japanese foreign minister Makiko Tanaka's June 2001 pledge to deny a visa to Lee ignited a political firestorm within the LDP as party elders accused Tanaka of "paying special attention" to Beijing's desire to minimize Taiwan's interaction with foreign nations, a stance "not quite in tune with the Japanese government's policy."<sup>84</sup> To this day, Lee Teng-hui still draws visits from the dozens of Japanese legislators that annually visit Taiwan, and he is still held in high esteem within certain Japanese circles.

Taiwan sympathizers in Japan are also enamored by the extraordinary liberalization that has taken place in Taiwan since the late 1980s. Taiwan's democratization resonates among Japanese policymakers and has enhanced the level of

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<sup>82</sup> Ted Osius, p. 26.

<sup>83</sup> Wingxin Qingxin, "Taiwan in Japan's Relations with China and the United States after the Cold War," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 3, August 2000, pp. 358-359.

<sup>84</sup> LDP members considered Tanaka "extra-sensitive" to Japan-China relations at the expense of U.S.-Japan relations. See "Koizumi Defends Embattled Foreign Minister," *Jiji Press*, 4 June 2001, in FBIS.



social and economic interaction between the two sides.<sup>85</sup> When Tokyo looks at Taiwan, it takes note of the island's abandoned Nationalist ideology, its democratized government, and its membership in key international regimes as evidence that "the attendant expansion of Japan-Taiwan relations" should commence.<sup>86</sup>

This apparent aspiration to enhance relations with Taiwan is in keeping with a latent but substantive desire to enhance Japan's foreign policy outlook in accordance with changes in Asia and the international system in general. Much of Japan's frustration concerning its dealings with China stem from Beijing's reluctance to acknowledge the dynamic differences in today's Asia as compared to three decades prior. Japan's expectation that Taiwan's socio-political maturity should precipitate a similar development in Japan-Taiwan relations<sup>87</sup> often prompts Japan to regard Taiwan in more progressive terms than China is comfortable with. During the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic, senior members of the Japan-Taiwan parliamentarians' league worked to persuade relevant government offices—to no avail—of the need for Taiwan's observer status in the World Health Organization (WHO).<sup>88</sup> Similar calls have gone out for Taiwan's incorporation into regional non-governmental structures to reflect its status as an economic tiger in Asia.<sup>89</sup>

Irrespective of the potency of Japan's pro-Taiwan lobby, it is a relatively small element of a much larger issue in Japanese foreign policy and therefore stands little chance of altering Japan's official position, even if it does generate conflicting interests that complicate Tokyo's diplomatic balancing act. Japanese legislators are quite cognizant of the political, economic, and strategic ramifications of abandoning its

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<sup>85</sup> Toshiro Ozawa, former acting director of the Japan Institute of International Affairs, "Japan and China," *Lecture at Simon Fraser University*, 14 March 2002, <[www.vancouver.ca.emb-japan.go.jp/consul\\_speeches/japan\\_china.htm](http://www.vancouver.ca.emb-japan.go.jp/consul_speeches/japan_china.htm)>, 2 July 2003.

<sup>86</sup> Japan's 2002 Foreign Policy Task Report, *Prime Minister's Official Residence*, 29 November 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>87</sup> Japan's 2002 Foreign Policy Task Report.

<sup>88</sup> "Japan Lawmakers: Taiwan should have WHO Observer Status to Fight SARS," *Jiji Press*, 15 May 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>89</sup> Japan has mulled concepts on the creation of an "East Asian business bloc" that would notionally include Taiwan. See "Japan Forum on Int'l Relations Calls For Creating East Asian Economic Community," *Nikkei Telecom*, 20 June 2003, in FBIS; and "Japan's Economy Ministry Eyes Asia's Answer to EU, NAFTA," *Jiji Press*, 1 July 2003, in FBIS.



adherence to the “one China” policy, and are firmly committed to its tenets as a means of pacifying Beijing and relegating the Taiwan question as a benign component in Japan’s foreign policy.<sup>90</sup> Japan has made it clear that regional harmony in conjunction with amicable Sino-Japanese relations has been and will continue to be a key driver of its Taiwan policy. Ultimately, Tokyo’s desire is to absolve itself of all responsibility for any inhibitors to China-Taiwan unification.<sup>91</sup>

## **2. Tokyo’s Perceptions of Missile Defense**

Overall, Japan supports the notion of developing a missile defense network with the United States for a variety of reasons.<sup>92</sup> From a security aspect, Japan eyes the DPRK’s Taepodong and Nodong missile potential as an immediate security threat, and it considers the PRC’s medium-range ballistic missile capability a long-term danger;<sup>93</sup> BMD is deemed a viable means to counter both of these threats. Japan also looks to missile defense as means to infuse military technology that could theoretically be employed for Japan’s defense in the event the U.S.-Japan alliance is unable meet this need.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, a functional countermeasure against theater ballistic missiles helps Japan preserve the status quo against the onset of new threats.<sup>95</sup> Commercially, missile defense is thought to have favorable implications for Japan’s defense industry, fostering a possible convergence of interests between the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA), the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI), defense contractors, and industrial offices.<sup>96</sup> Finally, Japan foresees advantageous political effects resulting from BMD participation. Specifically, a joint missile defense program could strengthen the U.S.-Japan alliance by intensifying the degree of cooperation between the two countries.

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<sup>90</sup> Protracted differences over the maritime rights of the Senkaku Islands (Tiaoyutai in Taiwan; Daioyu in China) remain a clear irritant to Japan-Taiwan relations. See “Taiwan Considers Renting out Disputed Senkaku Islands,” *Jiji Press*, 7 June 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>91</sup> Japan’s 2002 Foreign Policy Task Report.

<sup>92</sup> A recent Japan Defense Agency Report cited a “pressing” need for missile defense. See “Latest White Paper Cites ‘Pressing’ Need for Missile Defense,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 6 August 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>93</sup> Stimson Center Working Group Report, pp. 67-68.

<sup>94</sup> Stimson Center Working Group Report, pp. 66-67.

<sup>95</sup> Michael Green, *Japan’s Reluctant Realism*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>96</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 60.



Tokyo is also optimistic that it could garner greater leverage in the relationship, and therefore render more influence on Washington's foreign policy.<sup>97</sup>

But there exist myriad points of concern that shape the Japanese government's outlook on the practicality of a joint U.S.-Japan missile defense network. Prior to the release of its August 2003 White Paper, there had been a lack of consensus between Japan and the United States over the proposed timeline for the deployment of BMD. Tokyo was unnerved by what it perceived to be an excessively rapid deployment schedule on Washington's part. Ideally, the Japanese Defense Agency would have preferred an expanded timeline affording five-to-six years of joint technical research—beginning in 1999—to be followed by a general study to determine whether or not the initiative was worth pursuing, followed by another half-decade spent on actual deployment.<sup>98</sup> Washington's decision to deploy some variant of missile defense by 2004 “significantly upset the previously contemplated schedule” by which Tokyo had been operating.<sup>99</sup> Still, Japan considers itself somewhat bound to U.S. judgment, rationalizing that without a means of defending itself from ballistic missiles, it must accelerate its own search for deployment possibilities.<sup>100</sup>

Japan's reconciling of the BMD deployment timeline does not address another contentious issue for Japan: cost. Financial constraints resulting from defense budget cuts and Japan's recession and banking crisis play a large role in Tokyo's decision-making process.<sup>101</sup> Japan resents being pushed into making a decision for missile defense without the benefit of knowing and assessing these budget issues. Its ultimate anxiety involves the potential expenditure of huge sums of money on a technology that, in its estimation, remains in question.

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<sup>97</sup> Stimson Center Working Group Report, p. 66.

<sup>98</sup> Kazuteru Yoshiyama, “Inside Story of Tug-of-War Between Japan and the United States on ‘Missile Defense’ Concerning North Korea,” *Yomiuri Weekly*, 9 February 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Patrick Cronin and Michael Green, *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), p. 177.



Japan still juggles multiple legal questions surrounding the BMD issue,<sup>102</sup> the largest centering on the Japan's right to engage in collective self-defense. Until recently, Japan sought to limit its participation in missile defense to that of a "technological 'study,'" for fear of raising disputes over the constitutionality of its right to engage in a collaborative self-defense architecture.<sup>103</sup> As Japanese lawmakers point out, engagement of missiles targeted against a third country constitutes collective defense and violates constitutional stipulations. BMD proponents counter that Aegis-based missile defense—towards which Japan is most amenable—does not fall within the category of collective defense since ship-mounted radars will notionally discern whether or not an inbound missile will impact in Japan.<sup>104</sup> The issue continues to be a subject of contestation within the Japanese legislature. Prime Minister Koizumi has spoken out in favor of liberally interpreting Japan's constitution in order to accommodate BMD, but this appears to be a minority opinion.<sup>105</sup> Regardless, the issue will require resolution before BMD can be legally deployed.

The Japanese must also resolve how it may participate in missile defense without violating stipulations promulgated in various arms control agreements. Japan is reluctant to take part in a framework that contradicts accepted arms control regimes,<sup>106</sup> and is even more unwilling to champion itself—inadvertently or otherwise—as a proliferator of weapons, especially to China and Russia. Tokyo believes it can minimize these perceptions through enhanced collaboration on arms control and reduction efforts.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> A more innocuous legal matter concerns a 1969 legislative resolution that prohibits the militarization of outer space. While this issue could theoretically have implications for missile defenses utilizing space-based sensors, it is not considered a significant hindrance to Japan's affinity for BMD. See Richard Cronin, "Japan-U.S. Cooperation on Ballistic Missile Defense: Issues and Prospects," *CRS Report for Congress*, 19 March 2002, p. 25.

<sup>103</sup> Gaku Shibata, "Japan Perspective / Japan-U.S. Issues Due for Review," *The Daily Yomiuri*, 25 December 2001, in FBIS.

<sup>104</sup> "Japan to Introduce 'Controversial' U.S. Missile Defense System Against North Korea," *Mainichi Daily News*, 12 July 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>105</sup> Richard Cronin, p. 24.

<sup>106</sup> Cronin and Green, p. 178

<sup>107</sup> "Building Japan's Defense Policy (Proposed Outline)," unattributed posting on the "Policy Flash" (Seisaku Sokuho) portion of the LDP website, under the "Hot News" items, 5 February 2003, in FBIS.



Tokyo's larger overall concern regarding missile defense involves the anticipated reaction from Beijing. Several elements within Tokyo offer competing theories on how the "China factor" should be approached. Some desire for Japan to abstain from participation in a joint missile defense program, claiming that failure to do so may garner "distrust" and "negative reactions" that could erode bilateral ties between Beijing and Tokyo.<sup>108</sup> These groups also buy into Beijing's belief that missile defense will instigate an arms race among Asian states, and they place a fair amount of stock in PRC threats to increase its own missile inventories. Others insist that China's military modernization, especially its augmented IRBM missile inventory, warrants a more robust defensive posture from Japan. A third segment sees missile defense as an "arms negotiating card" to be used to gain concessions on security matters, such as the reduction of China's missile arsenal.<sup>109</sup>

### **C. THE VIEW FROM TAIPEI**

The crux of this problem lies as much with U.S. willingness to provide missile defense to Taiwan as it does with Taipei's resolve to invest in what is still (to Taiwan) a controversial technology. Before proceeding with BMD, Taiwan's decision-making bodies must reconcile a variety of issues and challenges in order to determine whether or not missile defense is a worthy endeavor or a venture in misappropriation.

#### **1. Taipei's Perceptions of Missile Defense**

Taipei generally supports delivery of missile defense systems to Taiwan, either in the form of PAC-3 or as a more robust initiative incorporating the United States, Japan, and potentially South Korea. First and foremost, BMD represents a modicum of relief from the hundreds of PRC ballistic missiles scattered along China's southeastern provinces. Taipei works incessantly to convey the preeminence of the PRC missile threat in its security calculations to all audiences in order to justify the advent of a missile defense program. President Chen Shui-bian rather deftly superimposes China's missile buildup upon recent DPRK nuclear brinksmanship, advocating a swift and effective

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<sup>108</sup> "Moving To Development Phase of Defense Program Would Generate Arms Race in North East Asia," *Ryukyu Shimpō*, 4 November 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>109</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 60; and "Withdrawal From the ABM Treaty—A Historical Shift in Security Policy," *Sankei Shimbun*, 15 December 2001, in FBIS.



means of retaliation that concomitantly addresses its own security concerns.<sup>110</sup> Even a lower tier missile defense can complicate Beijing's decision making by raising questions concerning China's ability to succeed MRBM launches with waves of SRBMs and land attack cruise missiles (LACM).<sup>111</sup>

Second, although ROC military and civilian officials bear no misconceptions regarding the limited protection even a layered missile defense system can provide, BMD promotes a small but substantive sense of security for the Taiwanese public. Some experts identify this as Taipei's foremost priority,<sup>112</sup> and it will likely serve as platform for Chen Shui-bian and his KMT opponent in the March 2004 presidential election.

Third, any missile defense system supplied by the United States constitutes a manifestation of Washington's support for Taipei and the defense of Taiwan, an especially precious commodity given that its security is so inextricably linked to U.S. goodwill. The acquisition of PAC-3, and perhaps a land or sea-based upper tier system, would require a more intimate relationship between Taipei and Washington, and would likely raise questions on U.S.-Taiwan interoperability in areas of Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence (C4I) and early warning. Taipei encourages this outcome, considering it an enabler for the resuscitation of U.S.-ROC defense ties evocative of the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty.<sup>113</sup>

At the same time, several factors temper Taipei's enthusiasm and complicate its decision making on missile defense, specifically cost, availability, and prudence.<sup>114</sup> First, the perceivably high cost of the system and its components daunts political and military decision makers. A weak economy worsened by conflicting budget priorities exacerbates this mindset, engendering considerable reluctance on the part of

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<sup>110</sup> Lin Chieh-yu and Lin Mei-chun, "Asia Needs a TMD: Chen," *Taipei Times*, 26 February 2003, p. 1.

<sup>111</sup> Eric McVadon, "Taiwan's Dilemma: Contemplating the Components of Comprehensive Defense, Deterrence, and Diplomacy," lecture at Monterey Institute of International Graduate Studies, 6 June 2003, hereafter referred to as "Taiwan's Dilemma."

<sup>112</sup> The government's priorities with respect to missile defense are to reassure the public, preserve relations with the United States, and minimize any adverse reactions from Beijing. See Swaine with Runyon, pp. 66-67.

<sup>113</sup> Stimson Center Working Group Report, p. 47.

<sup>114</sup> Eric McVadon, "Taiwan's Dilemma."



governmental legislators and defense ministry officials to commit to any version of missile defense that might preclude the acquisition of more germane defense systems. Second, lingering concerns over the system's development and availability generate questions as to whether missile defense is even an option for Taiwan. Some defense ministry officials questioned the efficacy of PAC-3 during the war in Iraq, insisting that the United States upgrade the system's quality prior to delivering it for use in Taiwan.<sup>115</sup> Finally, doubts about the efficacy and utility of BMD, both the system itself and its ability to protect against PLA missiles, create misgivings over the tactical worth of missile defense in general.

These concerns and viewpoints are replicated throughout Taiwan's military and civilian apparatuses. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) frames its contemplation of missile defense in terms of the PRC threat to Taiwan, combat needs, and defense budgetary constraints,<sup>116</sup> but most frequently it points to the estimated 450 ballistic missiles the PRC has deployed along its southeastern coast. Still, the MND routinely deliberates on BMD decision-making, and has even postponed its purchase of U.S. PAC-3 systems. There are apparent incongruities between the priorities of Chen Shui-bian and Defense Minister Tang Yiau-ming,<sup>117</sup> whose reluctance to proceed with PAC-3 purchases are reflected in his apparent opposition to the acceleration of Taiwan's BMD procurement process.<sup>118</sup>

The degree of support for missile defense within the military itself depends largely on the perceived fit the system will have within a particular service, as well as the estimated benefits to be garnered. Most of Taiwan's military is reluctant to endorse missile defense completely as a viable protector from PRC missile attacks. They are convinced that missile defense in Taiwan must overcome greater operational hurdles

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<sup>115</sup> Brian Hsu, "Taiwan Military Has 'Second Thoughts' About PAC-3," *Taipei Times*, 25 March 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>116</sup> Taijing Wu, "Taiwan Defense Ministry Studies Patriot Missiles," *Taiwan News*, 26 March 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>117</sup> Taiwan's military and presidential offices reportedly have different views on missile defense and Taiwan's self defense posture. See Chen Tsung-yi, "High Ranking Military Officials Fight for Positions with A-Bian's Clique," *Central News Agency*, 14 March 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>118</sup> Sofia Wu, "MND Denies Acceleration of Arms Procurement Under U.S. Pressure," *Central News Agency*, 14 March 2003, in FBIS.



resulting from the sophistication and proximity of China's missile threat. They also harbor concerns that a move to acquire upper-tier systems will provoke a PRC attack. Furthermore, the forbidding costs of missile defense induce uneasiness over the possible decimation of the military's procurement budget.<sup>119</sup> It is likely that once missile defense is incorporated into Taiwan's defense budget, priority for the distribution of defense resources will be granted to those agencies directly involved with the system.<sup>120</sup>

Taiwan's navy is the most supportive of BMD, particularly those systems incorporating the ACS. The acquisition of AEGIS-capable platforms would elevate the navy's status relative to other countries, in addition to providing it with enhanced combat capabilities. The air force also demonstrates a fervent backing for missile defense, viewing the project as an enhancement of its air defense capabilities and as a harbinger of sensory, Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence (C3I), and early warning upgrades. Contrarily, the army renders the least support for BMD, recognizing that the majority of missile defense projects fall outside its primary mission area of defending against a Chinese coastal attack.<sup>121</sup> Army officials also express concerns over the expense to be incurred by PAC-3 and AEGIS missile defense.

The mitigating factors of purchasing its way into a U.S.-tied missile defense system have prompted Taipei military analysts and officials to consider alternative methods through which to counter the PRC missile threat. Some experts advocate a more offensively oriented military posture as part of a preemptive defense policy in hopes of staving off a PRC missile attack. Proponents for this option believe that a limited but credible offensive capability might complicate PLA operational planning sufficiently enough to compel Beijing to reconsider the use of force against Taiwan.<sup>122</sup> Failing to deter an attack, offensive counterforce could weaken the PLA's ability to mount a sustained military operation.<sup>123</sup> "It is necessary for Taiwan to have critical counter

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<sup>119</sup> Mulvenon and Swaine, pp. 61-68.

<sup>120</sup> Wei-chin Lee, "Thunder in the Air: Taiwan and Theater Missile Defense," *The Nonproliferation Review*, Fall 2001, p. 10.

<sup>121</sup> Mulvenon and Swaine, pp. 61-68.

<sup>122</sup> Eric McVadon, "Taiwan's Dilemma."

<sup>123</sup> The viewpoints of each branch of military service are discussed in Mulvenon and Swaine, p. 66.



assault weapons in case of an attack from our neighbors.”<sup>124</sup> From an economic standpoint, an offensive capability is attractive to Taiwan since it provides a more cost-effective means by which to counteract China’s military threat. Taiwan defense officials calculate that in order to sufficiently defend against a missile attack—an undertaking requiring the purchase or construction of early warning aircraft, early warning satellites, ground-based early warning radars, C4I systems, and lower and upper tier missile defense systems—Taiwan must spend 180 times that of an enemy.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, the notion of preventative action garners greater appeal from ROC officials in light of the Bush Doctrine and its emphasis on preemptive strike.<sup>126</sup>

A second option that has been deliberated to a degree is the development and deployment of the indigenously produced anti-tactical ballistic missile systems (ATBM) such as the Tien Kung III (Sky Bow) missile system. Some circles advocate this as a suitable companion for U.S. lower-tier BMD systems, and in a few cases tout this as an altogether viable alternative against low altitude targets. Despite American pessimism, Taiwan’s Chungshan Institute of Science and Technology (CSIST) asserts that an ATBM system equivalent to PAC-3 is scheduled for completion by 2006.<sup>127</sup>

While weighing these factors, Taipei has preferred to implement a “wait and see” policy evocative of Japan’s approach to BMD, but now finds its decision-making process hastened in the face of mounting U.S. pressure to commit to PAC-3. No formal agreement has been reached regarding Taiwan’s acquisition of PAC-3, although MND for Armament General Chen Chao-ming reportedly brokered an informal arrangement with U.S. counterparts during his attendance at a conference sponsored by the U.S.-Taiwan Business Council in February 2003.<sup>128</sup> Taiwan likely intends to purchase approximately six PAC-3 batteries for deployment in the central and southern parts of the

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<sup>124</sup> Wu Taijing, “Taiwan President Promotes TMD Participation: Reaction,” *Taiwan News*, 26 February 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>125</sup> Brian Hsu, “Taiwan Military Promotes Developing Offensive Capabilities,” *Taipei Times*, 10 January 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>126</sup> Eric McVadon, “Taiwan’s Dilemma.”

<sup>127</sup> Wu Ming-chieh, “Home-Grown Low Altitude Antimissile System to be Deployed in Central and Southern Taiwan,” *Tzu-Yu Shih-Pao*, 29 August 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>128</sup> Brian Hsu, “Taiwan Defense Official Commits to PAC-3 Purchase,” *Taipei Times*, 18 March 2003, in FBIS.



island.<sup>129</sup> Beyond this, Taipei will likely pursue lower and upper-tier early warning systems and C3I components while lending token consideration for upper-tier missile defense systems.<sup>130</sup>

#### **D. SUMMARY**

Regional perceptions of ballistic missile defense combined with divergent views of the Taiwan question contribute to a volatile security environment in East Asia. Beijing's alarmist concerns over the implications of missile defense for China's reunification, Tokyo's desire to balance its sentiments for Taiwan with its need to maintain amicable ties with Beijing, and Taipei's ambivalence with respect to the conduciveness of BMD to ROC security presents Washington with a complicated set of issues for which it must account when delivering missile defense to Taiwan.

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<sup>129</sup> Brian Hsu, "Taiwan Military Has 'Second Thoughts' About PAC-3."

<sup>130</sup> Mulvenon and Swaine, pp. 166-167.



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## IV. PRC REACTIONS TO BMD

The PRC demands that the United States abandon its intentions to provide Taiwan with PAC-3 and other types of missile defenses lest serious consequences befall Sino-U.S. relations.<sup>131</sup> Beijing explicitly declares that any activity perceived as encroaching upon China's internal affairs is considered an unfriendly and potentially hostile act, and appears to have every intention of substantiating its claim to respond to the American intervention in Taiwan via any means necessary. The United States must be concerned with how and why Beijing may choose to retaliate to Taiwan's receipt of BMD. This chapter explores the determinants of China's potential reactions to missile defense in Taiwan and subsequently outlines the array of actions it might take in response.

### A. DETERMINANTS

Beijing's responses to BMD in Taiwan will reflect a set of priorities contingent upon circumstantial factors within China as well as external factors beyond China's control. These determinants will serve as indicators for how the PRC might choose to react to missile defense in Taiwan.

#### 1. Economic Modernization

Although reunification is high on Beijing's agenda, economic growth, and the preservation of an international environment conducive to it, remains China's overarching long-term goal and will undoubtedly qualify any reaction it takes to BMD in Taiwan. Economic modernization serves as the engine behind China's emergence as a legitimate global actor. China identifies economic development as its "most important task," and places it at the epicenter of its intent to "comprehensively build a well-off society, and speed up socialist modernization."<sup>132</sup> The modernization of China's economy bears equally significant implications for PRC internal stability. Post-Mao leaders recognize that their power base depends on their ability to provide a satisfactory quality of life for Chinese citizens.<sup>133</sup> The deterioration of communist ideology as a

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<sup>131</sup> "FM Spokesman on U.S. Arms Sales to Taiwan, TMD," *Xinhua*, 13 February 2001, in FBIS.

<sup>132</sup> "Wen Jiabao Presides over First Plenary Meeting of State Council," *Xinhua Domestic Service*, 21 March 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>133</sup> Robert Sutter, *Chinese Policy Priorities and Their Implications for the United States*, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), p. 4.



binding force among the Chinese people, combined with an almost non-existent revolutionary and nationalist personality within the Chinese leadership, means that the political legitimacy of China's leadership rests largely on sustained economic performance.<sup>134</sup>

Economic health also contributes extensively to China's security. A robust economy provides the foundation for the modernization of China's national defense and armed forces.<sup>135</sup> This is a crucial necessity in China's endeavor to live up to its nationally adopted philosophy, "rich country, strong army." In addition, China's economic potential affects its ability to manage its relations with surrounding territories. Using economic leverage, the PRC can facilitate the diplomatic isolation of Taiwan, and it can potentially exert pressure on Japan to discourage participation in a Taiwan Strait military scenario.<sup>136</sup>

## **2. Security Outlook**

The PRC's course of action will reflect its commitment to defensive realism, balance of power, and security driven expansion, wherein China strives to preserve its own power relative to others, notably the United States. Beijing resents the perceived impunity with which the United States exercises its influence in the region, and it regards any measures that further offset the strategic balance in East Asia, especially those that contribute to the U.S. advantage, as threatening to China's security and the stability of the region overall. It therefore takes active measures, ranging from the manipulation of other nations' foreign policies to the continued modernization of its military forces, to help restore the balance of power in East Asia and to facilitate the protection of China's national security interests.

Beijing is convinced that the United States endeavors to preserve its position as a regional and global hegemon and that America conspires to contain China's growth through the establishment and maintenance of an Asia-Pacific alliance system that

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> 2002 PRC National Defense White Paper; and Jiang Zemin's Report at the 16<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, 8 November 2002.

<sup>136</sup> Thomas Christensen, "China," in *Strategic Asia 2002-2003*, (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2002), p. 75.



directly targets China and strengthens American military presence in the region.<sup>137</sup> Trends in America's Asia policy during the 1990's, including the respecification of guidelines pertaining to the U.S.-Japan security alliance and the apparent expansion and redefinition of Cold War alliances incorporating Japan and South Korea, fuel China's beliefs that the United States aspires to install itself at the center of a regional alliance structure dedicated to the containment of China's ascension as a viable power.<sup>138</sup>

### **3. Internal Politics**

The thoughts and proclivities of China's new generation of political leaders are another pervasive determinant for Beijing's response to missile defense. Scarcely months after China's official changeover that saw Hu Jintao replace Jiang Zemin as PRC president and party general secretary, China's leadership ranks have been plagued with inconsistencies. Hu Jintao is widely considered a progressive technocrat with slightly more liberal leanings than his predecessor. The extent to which a relatively more progressive Hu can consolidate and exert influence over China's political and military arms will certainly pattern the PRC's response to matters in the Taiwan Strait. Some suspect that Hu will abstain from implementing any policies that significantly diverge from past practice until after Jiang's complete departure from political existence.<sup>139</sup> Even still, indicators suggest that China's leaders are intent upon implementing an activist approach to internal policy issues divergent from the conservative status quo.<sup>140</sup> Whether these tendencies will translate to more substantive foreign policy issues remains questionable. Thus far, Hu has encountered apparent resistance from Jiang and his political cronies, who are reportedly averse to recent trends towards government openness. As BMD in Taiwan moves closer to reality, Hu and the rest of China's political leadership will encounter challenges.

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<sup>137</sup> Greg May, "China's Opposition to TMD Is More About Politics Than Missiles."

<sup>138</sup> Lampton and May, p. 46.

<sup>139</sup> Joseph Kahn, "Analysts See Tension In China Within the Top Leadership," *New York Times*, 1 July 2003, <ebird.dtic.mil/Jul2003/e20030701197057.html>, 1 July 2003.

<sup>140</sup> H. Lyman Miller, "The 10<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress and China's Leadership Transition," *China Leadership Monitor*, Summer 2003, No. 7, <www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20033/lm.pdf>, 7 August 2003, p. 1.



In a similar vein, the degree to which the PLA exercises influence in national politics and foreign policy will affect the nature of China's response. As the relative military expertise of China's senior leadership recedes over time, PLA experts will exert greater influence on certain foreign affairs matters.<sup>141</sup> This is most salient where Taiwan is concerned. Exceptionally strong apprehensions over the preservation of China's political legitimacy, national integrity, and international sovereignty make the PLA an integral component in China's decision-making.

Within this context, however, the PLA's role in PRC foreign policy may be deteriorating as China's new leadership echelon establishes itself. As of the summer of 2003, Jiang Zemin still maintains control of the PLA as chairman of the Central Military Commission. Some calculate that Jiang's intimate relationship with the PLA better served PRC purposes in the handling of the Taiwan issue.<sup>142</sup> However, the previously mentioned frictions within the Chinese government cast questions as to how long Jiang can sustain this influence. The PLA in recent years has demonstrated unquestioned loyalty to Jiang and has been keen to embrace his political rhetoric.<sup>143</sup> Experts suspect that China's fourth generation leadership may try to shift more control of the PLA to the CCP Politburo, a move that Jiang reportedly opposes.<sup>144</sup>

#### **4. BMD System Capabilities**

One of the most important variables in determining China's response to missile defense in Taiwan is the type of system or systems that Taiwan might acquire. Most China watchers agree that Taiwan's procurement of PAC-3 systems will least antagonize Beijing, whereas the development of upper tier and sea-based missile defenses, particularly those that enhance the degree of interoperability between the Taiwanese and American militaries, could easily be interpreted as a more menacing affront to PRC sovereignty. Sea-borne assets also present a tactical dilemma for China. A missile

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<sup>141</sup> Michael Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking*, Rand, 1998, <[www.rand.org/publications/CF/CF145/CF145.chap3.pdf](http://www.rand.org/publications/CF/CF145/CF145.chap3.pdf)>, 2 July 2003.

<sup>142</sup> Willy Lam, "Taiwan Issues Keep Jiang in Army Role," *CNN*, 22 November 2002, <[edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/east/11/21/china.jiang/](http://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/east/11/21/china.jiang/)>, 3 July 2003.

<sup>143</sup> James Mulvenon, "The PLA and the 'Three Represents': Jiang's Bodyguards or Party Army?" *China Leadership*, Fall 2002, No. 4, <[www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20024/jm.pdf](http://www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20024/jm.pdf)>, 6 June 2003.

<sup>144</sup> Joseph Kahn, "Analysts See Tension In China Within the Top Leadership."



defense system utilizing Aegis cruisers and destroyers qualitatively enhances Taiwan's naval potential. In addition, the maneuverability of these assets complicates China's ability to target Taiwan via desired azimuth attack angles. This would very much motivate the PLA to pursue technological developments designed to neutralize sea-borne assets.

However, a U.S. decision to limit missile defense sales to PAC-3 does not guarantee a benign response from China. Although PAC-3 is considered the least irritating to cross strait relations, it could easily function as what Beijing might consider a culminating act of impropriety on Taipei's part, to which the PRC may decide to respond in a more aggressive manner. By this logic, Taiwan's acquisition of missile defense might serve as the final straw in a long lineage of subversive behavior that breeds the perception of Taiwan's "creeping independence." The ROC is especially adept at minute acts of indiscretion, such as the introduction of new passports featuring the word "Taiwan," and the holding of voter referendums on controversial issues like Taiwan's nuclear policy and WHO membership. When viewed separately, these acts are little more than minor aggravations; and, indeed, certain versions of missile defense might fall within this category. But an accumulation of these perceived acts of defiance, coupled with the security implications that missile defense brings to the table, might constitute a "death by a thousand cuts" for Beijing, perhaps warranting more definitive action.<sup>145</sup>

## **5. Rhetoric**

The degree to which Beijing perceives that the United States has overstepped its bounds regarding its relations with Taiwan will also determine the scope of China's retaliation. The PRC is especially sensitive to rhetoric. A perceived shift in the intensity of U.S. commitment to Taiwan, either through policy statements, Congressional legislation, or candid remarks by prominent government officials may be construed as provocative in Beijing and could steer China away from a more open-minded approach. Likewise, the proliferation of comments and ideas supportive of U.S. BMD and its concomitant alliance implications from Taipei would immediately hyper-sensitize Beijing towards missile defense.

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<sup>145</sup> Dr. Denny Roy, Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, interview by Darren E. Rice, 8 July 2003, Honolulu Hawaii.



## **B. COURSES OF ACTION**

China's assortment of responses to missile defense encompasses an extensive array of political, strategic, and armed actions designed to dissuade decision-makers in Taipei, Washington, and even Tokyo from pursuing a BMD program with Taiwan, and, if necessary, discourage these same countries from executing a shared military campaign against China.

The United States must be prepared to handle a collection of PRC reactions to missile defense in Taiwan, ranging from increased rhetoric, to economic sanctions, to actual military conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Although each scenario differs in likelihood, all are nonetheless possible and must be anticipated at least to some degree.

### **1. Political**

Within the spectrum of potential PRC responses to Taiwan BMD, a political rejoinder would constitute the most innocuous. In implementing a course of action with political implications, Beijing hopes to influence favorably the decisions made in Washington, Taipei, and Tokyo to the point where the placement of missile defense in Taiwan would be considered detrimental to each nation's interests. A political solution to the Taiwan BMD issue helps produce a benign context in which eventual reunification can transpire. It minimizes the degree of cross-strait animosity that might result from a more abrasive settlement, and is most likely to leave the foundation for Sino-U.S. and Sino-Japanese relations undisturbed. The PRC has a variety of political options it might choose to implement in response to BMD in Taiwan, but it is realistically limited by domestic and geopolitical variables that make some measures more feasible than others.

#### ***a. Political Pressure/Rhetoric***

Beijing will almost assuredly saturate its neighbors and other prominent global powers with scathing rhetoric denouncing the delivery of any BMD systems to Taiwan. Washington can expect Beijing to mount a fierce anti-American campaign depicting the United States as a "hegemonist" power intent on intervening in China's sovereign affairs and provoking instability in the Taiwan Strait. This intense rhetoric will likely be accompanied by a hefty exertion of political pressure upon other regional states, including ASEAN, to regard the delivery of BMD systems to Taiwan as illegal, inflammatory, and generally detrimental to regional security.



Beijing is proficient at levying political pressure upon regional nations in order to influence behavior and policy. China holds substantial weight among the ASEAN states and figures prominently in the foreign policies of Seoul and Tokyo. In 1996 the PRC successfully convinced Japan not to administer a visa to former ROC president Lee Teng-hui, who had just concluded an equally controversial trip to the United States. Some experts contend that South Korea's muted behavior towards BMD and the Taiwan issue results from a calculated desire not to offend Beijing.

In some instances, the PRC might not require a proactive bid to discourage its neighbors from acquiescing to U.S. BMD plans, but instead might only need to play upon their existing concerns. The inherent self-interests of surrounding nations may be sufficient to compel these states to support China's objections at least partially even if faced with little or no PRC pressure. No country wishes to handle the economic ramifications that might be concomitant with China's retaliation to BMD, nor is any state interested in spurring China's military modernization and ballistic missile enhancement. Certainly the prospect of a military conflict in the Taiwan Strait would more than suffice in coalescing ardent protest to U.S. missile defense plans. The degree to which Beijing can appeal to these apprehensions could go far in bolstering international condemnation of Taiwan missile defense.

***b. Exploitation of International Regimes***

Another tactic Beijing is likely to employ involves frustrating the United States within the United Nations and through other multinational forums in order to hinder its ability to achieve valued national objectives. The PRC could resort to this option regardless of the type of BMD system procured by Taiwan. Even though the PRC is often reluctant to adopt an activist position in the United Nations, Beijing derives a sense of security whenever the United States is forced to work through the U.N. Not only does it provide China with the means to influence pertinent events, but it also helps ensure that the United States is not acting unilaterally in disregard of the concerns of other nations. Should it choose to do so, China could conceivably use its U.N. veto power to obstruct the passage of resolutions either backed by the United States or thought to work in American interests. In addition to sending a clear message to Washington, an



obstructionist stance would provide Beijing leverage with which to engage the United States in matters of quid pro quo.

If Beijing decided to behave more proactively, it could accompany such a maneuver with an effort to consolidate coalition support against U.S. initiatives within the United Nations.<sup>146</sup> This is a particularly attractive option for Beijing in light of its concerns over U.S. political and military entrenchment in East Asia. Beijing has demonstrated its willingness to use international regimes as a tool to defend its interests. In 1997 the PRC vetoed a U.N. resolution to send peacekeepers in follow-up to the Guatemalan civil war due to Guatemala City's warm relations with Taipei.<sup>147</sup> Two years later, it blocked a proposal for extended U.N. intervention in Kosovo, fearing the action might set a precedent injurious to its own Taiwan policy. The PRC also holds influence within the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and is able to foster an environment less than conducive to Western ideals and principles.<sup>148</sup>

***c. Diminished Support for U.S. Counter-terrorism Efforts***

China has the option of discreetly fomenting complications for the United States in certain areas known to be pivotal to U.S. security interests. By this strategy, the PRC theoretically has the option of diminishing its cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism. Certainly, Beijing is uneasy with aspects of U.S. global counter-terrorism efforts. President Bush's "axis of evil" speech struck a particularly sour chord in Beijing, as did the adoption of the Bush doctrine and its preeminent strike philosophy. Some in the PRC consider the fight against terrorism an aspect of the U.S. quest for "absolute security," which perceptibly encourages U.S. "hegemonism" at the expense of China and other regional states.<sup>149</sup> Also, the presence of U.S. military forces in Central Asia threatens to extinguish the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which, prior to

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<sup>146</sup> Brad Roberts, "China-U.S. Nuclear Relations: What Relationship Best Serves U.S. Interests?" *Institute for Defense Analysis*, IDA Paper P-3640, August 2001, p. A24-A25.

<sup>147</sup> The veto was later dropped, but only after much consternation from Beijing.

<sup>148</sup> For example, with the exception of Singapore, all ASEAN countries refuse to permit U.S. basing in their borders, or even to support military prepositioning in their home waters. See Denny Roy, *China's Foreign Relations*, pp. 192-3.

<sup>149</sup> Lu Yousheng, "'Cold Warrior' Security Strategy Reviews US National Security Strategy and Criticizes Explicit 'Hegemonism'," *Liaowang*, 14 October 2002, in FBIS; and Liu Jianfei, "Grasp Relation Between Antiterrorism and Anti-Hegemonism," *Liaowang*, 24 February 2003, in FBIS.



9/11, was a promising vehicle through which the PRC hoped to strengthen its security in its northwest.<sup>150</sup>

However, the likelihood that Beijing would undertake methods to hinder the war on terror is scant at best. Sino-U.S. counter-terror participation affords the PRC leeway in dealing with the Islamic Movement in East Turkistan (Uighar separatists in Xinjiang province), a concession Beijing, for the purposes of regime preservation and national integrity, does not wish to relinquish.<sup>151</sup> The PRC is also motivated by the prestige associated with an international campaign against terror, and relishes the opportunity to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other “great” powers. In addition, China sees economic benefit in aiding the U.S. war on terror, especially if the alternative contributes to an under-performing U.S. economy. Such an outcome would have adverse effects on China’s economic growth.<sup>152</sup>

***d. Exploitation of the North Korean Issue***

Recognizing that it plays a pivotal role in U.S. attempts to stabilize the Korean peninsula, the PRC may seek ways to prevent the United States from realizing its goals in this arena. China could withdraw its cooperation in promoting regional restraint in the DPRK, forcing the United States to address the prospect of a nuclear North Korea without Chinese backing.<sup>153</sup> An imaginative Beijing might find ways to instigate or capitalize upon existing trouble areas that could divert U.S. attention from Taiwan and BMD.

However, China is unlikely to adopt such a course of action since prolonging the North Korean standoff runs counter to PRC interests. First, the PRC likely does not want to accede to the existence of a nuclear-capable Korean peninsula

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<sup>150</sup> Su Kaihua, “Russian-US Strategic Adjustment and Its Impact,” *Dangdai Yatai*, 15 April 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>151</sup> Thomas Christensen, “Terrorism, Taiwan Elections, and Tattered Treaties: PRC Security Politics from September 11 Through Year’s End,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 1, Part 2, December 2001, <[www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20011b/CLM20011TC.pdf](http://www.chinaleadershipmonitor.org/20011b/CLM20011TC.pdf)>, 22 September 2002.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Brad Roberts, p. A-24; and Robert Sutter, “China and U.S. Missile Defense Proposals: Reactions and Implications,” *CRS Report for Congress*, 17 March 1999, p. 5; and Toby F. Dalton and Michael J. Green, “Asian Reactions to U.S. Missile Defense,” *National Bureau of Asian Research*, Vol. 11, No. 3, November 2000, p. 42.



potentially subject to U.S. influence in the event of Korean unification. China's foremost concern with Korea has always been the danger that a great foreign power might use the peninsula to threaten China's industrial heartland in the northeast,<sup>154</sup> and it is determined to prevent a scenario wherein the United States becomes the primary outside influence on Pyongyang and Seoul.<sup>155</sup> Second, the PRC fears that a nuclear North Korea could stimulate a disturbing chain of events in which South Korea, Japan, and even Taiwan begin pursuing their own nuclear weapons programs. And third, by helping bring resolution to the North Korea issue, Beijing places the onus on Washington and Tokyo to justify their BMD programs. The PRC begrudges the fact that Japan and the United States use the DPRK as an excuse for their rapid missile defense deployments, suspecting that China, not North Korea, is the impetus behind regional BMD efforts.

***e. Renewed or Expanded Proliferation Practices***

The prospect of missile defense in Taiwan could easily compel Beijing to renew, continue, or perhaps increase the transfer of dual use items that may contribute to the construction of weapons of mass destruction. The PRC is notorious for using the "proliferation card" as a mechanism for salvaging its national interests in the face of disagreeable U.S. policies.<sup>156</sup> Beijing is especially fond of using U.S. arms sales to Taiwan as a foil to legitimize its own proliferation practices. In the midst of Defense Secretary William Cohen's visit to China in July 2000, PRC Foreign Ministry Spokesman Sun Yuxi explicitly stated that China would consider reneging on its non-proliferation commitments if the United States were to proceed with a theater missile defense system.<sup>157</sup> Although Washington has repeatedly countered these threats by reiterating its commitment to the 1979 TRA, Beijing nevertheless rationalizes its actions as meeting China's national interests.

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<sup>154</sup> Andrew Nathan and Robert Ross, p. 93.

<sup>155</sup> Robert Sutter, *Chinese Policy Priorities and Their Implications for the United States*, p. 99.

<sup>156</sup> For a more extensive analysis of China's proliferation habits, see Mohan Malik, *Dragon on Terrorism: Assessing China's Tactical Gains and Strategic Losses Post-September 11*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002); and Mohan Malik, "China Plays 'The Proliferation Card'," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, July 2000.

<sup>157</sup> John Pomfret, "China Again Demands U.S. Drop Missile Defense Plan; Beijing Links Weapons Exports To American Verdict on System," *The Washington Post*, 12 July 2000, p. A-16.



The PRC is also daunted by what it perceives to be a growing asymmetry in missile politics. Washington's systematic withdrawal from certain missile control commitments has left Beijing searching for other means by which to cope. Beijing, at a minimum, seeks quid pro quo from Washington, seeing neither benefit nor fairness in the United States exercising its ability to circumvent or ignore internationally binding regimes. Without the guaranteed assurance of U.S. participation in such agreements as the ABM and the MTCR—to which China claims to abide but has not formally accepted—China has little incentive to constrain itself in such perceivably defunct frameworks. Hence, China would view the U.S. incorporation of Taiwan into a missile defense program as a breach of the MTCR, and would likely respond with measures equally contrary to the conditions of this regime. An unnamed “senior Chinese official” in 1999 reasoned that, if the United States were to violate the MTCR in such a capacity, China could just as scrupulously break from the regime's terms in order to “undertake cooperation on missiles and missile technology with third countries.”<sup>158</sup>

But China's propensity to match U.S. policy with calculated subversive behavior may be waning, particularly in the post-September 11 environment. There is growing evidence suggesting that China is gradually coming to terms with the inherent value of cooperating with the United States on issues of counter-proliferation. One PRC scholar concludes that cooperation with U.S. non-proliferation efforts is in China's better interests, and indeed merits the support of the entire international community.<sup>159</sup> An article in *Zhanlue yu Guanli* contends, “Active participation in international arms control and arms reduction activities and strengthening and improving international arms control and nonproliferation mechanisms helps maintain world peace and the stability of regions surrounding China.”<sup>160</sup> These sentiments are occurring with greater frequency in PRC daily rhetoric, lending credence to the notion that the PRC may be outgrowing its proliferation tendencies.

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<sup>158</sup> Peter Kien-hong Yu and Martin Lasater, *Taiwan's Security in the Post-Deng Xiaoping Era*, (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 260, quoting from *Financial Times*, February 26, 1999.

<sup>159</sup> See Yang Chuang, “Some Thoughts on the Current International Situation and China's Strategic Policy Options,” *Waijiao Xueyuan Xuebao*, 25 March 2003, p. 36-40, in FBIS.

<sup>160</sup> Gu Guoliang, “China's Arms Control Strategy in Response to Bush Government's Arms Control Thought, Policy Adjustment and Changes,” *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, 1 August 2002, in FBIS.



***f. Economic Sanctions***

Beijing could feasibly resort to economic coercion to discourage countries from abetting Taiwan's receipt of BMD. As the region's second largest economy, and an increasingly prominent participant in the globalized economic infrastructure, the PRC possesses a sizeable amount of leverage with which to manipulate others.

Nevertheless, economic sanctions—directed either towards Japan or the United States—are not a viable option for China. First, they contradict China's principal goal of a "rich country" by endangering the economic ties with China's two largest trade and investment partners. China's economic infrastructure relies heavily on Japanese support, welcoming Japan's foreign direct investment (FDI) while thriving on its lucrative markets. The PRC has received over \$23 billion in Japanese economic aid since 1979,<sup>161</sup> and Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China registered a net total of \$1.26 billion as of 1999.<sup>162</sup> China also does not wish to risk upsetting the trade balance with the United States, which constitutes China's second largest trading partner with the promise of becoming China's leading trade market by 2005.

Second, economic sanctions are historically anemic methods for effecting policy changes within a state<sup>163</sup> and could potentially accomplish the reverse of China's original intent; instead of provoking doubt and apprehension among political leaders over their role in missile defense, China could actually strengthen U.S. and Japanese resolve by enhancing resentment towards the PRC and increasing the salience of U.S.-Japan cooperation. This would considerably exacerbate the cross-strait rift and might provide Taiwan with additional ammunition with which to oppose reunification.

***g. Economic Sanctions on the ROC***

The other economic option for China is to impose sanctions on Taiwan. The PRC might reap benefits from sanctioning Taiwan if the impact were significant

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<sup>161</sup> Michael Armacost and Kenneth Pyle, *Japan and the Engagement of China: Challenges for U.S. Policy*, NBR Analysis, Vol. 12, No. 5, (December 2001), p. 3.

<sup>162</sup> "Japan's ODA Results," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: Economic Cooperation for China*, October 2001, <[http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/region/e\\_asia/china-2.html#select](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/region/e_asia/china-2.html#select)>, 15 December 2002.

<sup>163</sup> For an extensive study on the effectiveness of economic sanctions, see Chen-yuan Tung, "China's Economic Leverage and Taiwan's Security Concerns with Respect to Cross-Strait Economic Relations," Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2002, pp. 123-133.



enough to foster public dissatisfaction with the status quo and generate a fifth-column effect within Taiwan. Sanctions might also have strategic merit if they can successfully impair Taiwan's ability to invest in requisite defense systems and technology.

However, most of the arguments against sanctions on Japan and the United States are applicable to Taiwan. There is a strong chance that the cost-benefit of Taiwan sanctions would not work in China's favor. Taiwan business has invested approximately \$70 billion in Mainland China over the past decade, roughly 40% of the island's total overseas investments.<sup>164</sup> In addition, the risk of exacerbating anti-Chinese sentiments among the Taiwanese public is discouraging. Beijing has twice been deterred from placing economic sanctions on Taiwan<sup>165</sup> and will only grow more reticent to do so as Taiwan's viability to China's economic livelihood enhances.

## **2. PRC Strategic Approaches**

A strategic approach from China would involve a course of action designed to enhance the PRC's leverage over Taiwan without altering the context by resorting to force. In this vein, China will direct most of its strategic initiatives towards ensuring that it can achieve "surprise, deception and shock" in the opening stages of a military campaign.<sup>166</sup> Knowing that it cannot rule out the possibility of armed conflict with the United States, Beijing's attempts to complicate America's ability to provide assistance to Taiwan by confusing U.S. political and military decision-makers, delaying the arrival of substantive American military assistance, and deterring the United States from undertaking certain courses of action.<sup>167</sup> It can therefore be expected that China will carry out appropriate measures well prior to such a juncture to enhance its ability to execute this strategy.

### ***a. Upgraded Missile Capabilities***

Regardless of the type of missile defense delivered to Taiwan, the PRC is certain to seek a technical solution that will enable it to maintain its tactical advantage

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<sup>164</sup> *Brookings Northeast Asia Survey 2001-02*, p. 50.

<sup>165</sup> Chen-yuan Tung, "China's Economic Leverage and Taiwan's Security Concerns with Respect to Cross-Strait Economic Relations," Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2002, pp. 234-242.

<sup>166</sup> Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," 28 July 2003.

<sup>167</sup> Eric McVadon, "Taiwan's Dilemma."



and scheme of coercion over Taiwan.<sup>168</sup> Therefore, Beijing is likely to invest in qualitative improvements in its missile delivery vehicles, guidance and navigation systems, and warhead technology, while augmenting the size of its missile force, in efforts to field a comprehensive missile competency that is able to defeat whatever BMD systems Taiwan might employ. A more robust ballistic missile deterrent helps ensure that the PRC retains the strategic leverage necessary to effect a favorable resolution to the Taiwan issue by adding credibility to China's military threat and by forcing participatory nations to reconcile China's potential to overwhelm a missile defense shield.

The PRC is extremely transparent about its willingness to improve its missile inventory in the face of any East Asia BMD program, considering it "a basic guarantor for maintaining China's reliable nuclear deterrence forces."<sup>169</sup> The United States expects the number of Chinese SRBMs to grow substantially beyond the estimated 450 that are currently deployed.<sup>170</sup>

The improvement of China's missile capacity will likely include expanded efforts to obtain MIRVed and MARVed warheads and survivability devices, along with modifications to the PLA's limited nuclear doctrine.<sup>171</sup> The PLA actively experiments with ballistic missile countermeasures designed to enhance missile survivability against BMD assets. As recently as February 2003, China demonstrated an ability to incorporate multiple warheads on a test launched DF-21 MRBM.<sup>172</sup> China is also likely to continue its development of cruise missiles, providing the PRC a strike weapon not susceptible to BMD systems.

***b. Continued PLA Modernization***

BMD may also feed into China's intent to modernize the PLA in preparation for a possible armed conflict over Taiwan. China can be expected to seek greater proficiency in information warfare, guidance and navigation, command and

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<sup>168</sup> Dr. Chris McNally, East West Center, interview by Darren E. Rice, 10 July 2003, Honolulu, HI.

<sup>169</sup> Gu Guoliang, "China's Arms Control Strategy in Response to Bush Government's Arms Control Thought, Policy Adjustment and Changes."

<sup>170</sup> "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China."

<sup>171</sup> Swaine with Runyon, p. 57.

<sup>172</sup> Hiroyuki Sugiyama, *The Daily Yomiuri*, 7 February 2003, in FBIS.



control, and information systems technology, all of which are designed to facilitate China's rapid reaction and enhance its ability to win a local/limited war under high tech conditions.<sup>173</sup>

China will also attempt to enhance its air, naval, and strike capabilities in preparation for U.S. intervention in a strait crisis. In addition to the formidable arsenal of short and medium theater ballistic missiles in Fujian province opposite Taiwan, China possesses a potent array of surface-to-surface and air-to-surface cruise missiles designed to improve the PLA's anti-ship and land attack potential. An aptitude of this sort can serve as either a deterrent against a Taiwanese declaration of independence or as a castigatory measure after the fact. Furthermore, China pursues a cruise missile capability sufficient enough to threaten any naval assets the United States might commit to the area should Washington decide to intervene on Taiwan's behalf.

Modernization also serves PRC interests by preserving a propitious military balance vis-à-vis the ROC. The PRC estimates that as long as it can mitigate Taiwan's qualitative military advantage, the likelihood for success in the event of coercive armed action increases. A military context that favors the PLA also enhances the deterrent factor that Beijing seeks to instill among Taiwanese independence seekers.

*c. Technology Acquisition Through Subversion and Espionage*

Should it decide that political methods directed against BMD in Taiwan are either unproductive or detrimental to its national interests, the PRC is also capable of illegally and covertly obtain missile defense technology from Taiwan through the use of subversion tactics. This would facilitate the production of missile countermeasures designed to neutralize BMD systems and could be implemented towards the construction of a Chinese version of missile defense as well.

The PRC has in place a very mature espionage network that is adept at soliciting Taiwanese nationals in order to obtain military secrets and technologies. Particularly susceptible are retired Taiwanese military personnel who are often recruited

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<sup>173</sup> Bernard Cole and Paul Godwin, "Advanced Military Technology and the PLA: Priorities and Capabilities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," in Larry Wortzel, ed., *The Chinese Armed Forces in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Strategic Studies Institute, 1999).



either by the PLA or other Chinese organizations. The PRC also has success at conscripting poor Chinese civilians looking to augment their meager incomes.<sup>174</sup>

Espionage is a salient concern for both Taiwan and the United States. In August 2003, Taiwan High Court prosecutors arrested three men suspected of delivering to China, among other things, information related to Taiwan's theater missile defense (TMD) project taken from the CSIST.<sup>175</sup> Taipei officials estimate that hundreds of PRC intelligence agents operate in Taiwan, of which only a handful has been convicted.<sup>176</sup>

**d. Missile Demonstration**

A show of military proficiency designed to levy political pressure on the United States, Taiwan and Japan is not outside the realm of possibility, regardless of the missile defense systems delivered to Taiwan. A missile demonstration would carry both political and strategic connotations. As with its missile tests during the 1995-96 strait crisis, a missile demonstration would strive to dislodge public opinion away from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) party by lowering public confidence in Taiwan's leadership, foreign policy, and security strategy.

A study of the PLA's previous missile demonstrations reveals that China could lose more than it gains by launching missiles at or near Taiwan. The PRC's notorious 1995 and 1996 missile demonstrations brought mixed results at best. On one hand, China was able to disrupt Taiwan's economic and social stability,<sup>177</sup> retard the gains made by years of Taiwanese pragmatic diplomacy<sup>178</sup> and generally if not briefly temper the island's confidence in the face of PRC pressure. On the other hand, Beijing undermined its own interests by perpetuating the "China threat" as a topic in U.S.-Japan security discussions and, worse still, strengthening U.S.-Taiwan defense relations. The

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<sup>174</sup> "Three Alleged China Spies Detained in Taiwan," *AFP*, 4 May 1999, in FBIS.

<sup>175</sup> See Hung-fu Hsueh, "Prosecutors Detain Three Men on Charges of Espionage for China," *Taiwan News.com*, 7 August 2003, <[www.etainews.com/Taiwan/2003/08/07/1060218842.htm](http://www.etainews.com/Taiwan/2003/08/07/1060218842.htm)>, 16 August 2003; and Lu Kai-tuan, "Yeh Yu-chen Has Ties to Communist China's Central Military Commission," *Lien-Ho Pao*, 8 August 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>176</sup> "Hundreds of PRC Spies in Taiwan: NSB Official," *The China Post*, 6 December 2000, Taiwan Headlines, <[www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/20001206/20001206p5.html](http://www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/20001206/20001206p5.html)>, 13 August 2003.

<sup>177</sup> T.Y. Wang, "Taiwan and Theater Missile Defense," *The Journal of Social, Political, and Economic Studies*, Washington, Fall 2000.

<sup>178</sup> Mulvenon and Swaine, p. 136.



most galling outcome in Beijing's estimation was the resolve demonstrated by the United States and its resolute intervention on Taiwan's behalf.

Based on this case study, a missile demonstration in response to BMD would not serve China's long-term interests. From a political standpoint, it would almost certainly reinforce in Washington and Taipei a decision to protect Taiwan from PRC missiles, and would likely galvanize public disdain towards China and reunification. The strategic advantages for the PRC are just as tenuous. China stands to benefit if Taiwan demonstrates little or no capacity to defend against the missiles. However, if Taiwan successfully downed one or more of the test shots with its own BMD capabilities, a backlash of Taiwanese confidence could ensue; so too could the justification for additional BMD assets in Taiwan and elsewhere throughout the region. This would dramatically raise the stakes for Beijing.

*e. Sino-Russian Collusion*

Another strategy for China involves soliciting a partnership with another nation, the most likely candidate being Russia. Recent summits between Russian president Vladimir Putin and CCP General Secretary Hu Jintao have disclosed a mutual desire of both parties to enhance the security relationship between the formerly allied nations in an attempt to balance U.S. global influence. The February 2003 meeting between the two powers was not the first time China and Russia have expressed their criticism of U.S. policy. Moscow and Beijing unleashed a tandem denigration of U.S. missile defense plans in a July 2000 joint communiqué. In July 2001 the two powers codified their Good Neighborly Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation, formalizing their mutual commitment to combat what each perceived as mounting U.S. "hegemonism" in the post-Cold War era.

Although Moscow shares Beijing's concerns that missile defense might upset the balance of stability in East Asia, recent trends suggest it is doubtful that a Sino-Russian partnership of political or strategic consequence will develop anytime soon. Indeed, some experts in the PRC are daunted by the emaciation of the once promising partnership with Russia.<sup>179</sup> The mutual acquiescence by Beijing and Moscow to the

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<sup>179</sup> Su Kaihua, "Russian-US Strategic Adjustment and Its Impact."



placement of U.S. forces in Central Asia, a region traditionally falling within Russian and Chinese purview, reflected a distinct lack of strategic collaboration.<sup>180</sup> Furthermore, talks between President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin have succeeded in establishing a limited basis of commonality between the United States and Russia in areas such as security and counter-terrorism. In April 2002, President Bush announced that Russia would be tentatively incorporated in NATO as a “junior partner,” a maneuver that contradicts decades of Cold War anxieties and runs counter to Chinese hopes to harness Russian anti-NATO sentiments. Even the Bush administration’s support of Moscow during and after the hostage standoff by Chechnyan rebels in October 2002 indicated sound bilateral relations.<sup>181</sup> These are merely some of the unsettling signs for China that it cannot necessarily rely on Russia as a political and strategic backer against missile defense in Taiwan.

### **3. Armed Approaches**

Only if the delivery of BMD systems to Taiwan is perceived to hinder the reunification process beyond unacceptable terms or, worse yet, to instigate an inevitable Taiwanese move towards independence, will the PRC be compelled to employ military force. The PLA could conceivably launch military operations designed to halt Taiwan’s progression to independence, coerce Taiwan into capitulation, or eliminate specific BMD and other military sites.

#### **a. Blockade or Quarantine**

Taiwan’s relatively miniscule coastline gives China the option of implementing a blockade of the Taiwan Strait to oblige Taiwan to abandon its rogue behavior. The PLA conceivably might target Taiwanese port facilities and shipping with sea, air, and land-based military assets in the hopes of disabling Taiwan’s shipping

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<sup>180</sup> H. Lyman Miller, “The Limits of Chinese-Russian Strategic Collaboration,” *Center for Contemporary Conflict*, 2 September 2002, <[www.ccc.nps.navy.mil](http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil)>, 19 April 2003.

<sup>181</sup> Moscow’s decision to use Fentanyl gas, along with the government’s reluctance to release the name of the agent in a timely fashion, garnered widespread censure. But Washington sent a positive message to Moscow by holding back on its criticism, going so far as to absolve Russia of any wrongdoing. See “West Backs Russia over Rescue Tactics,” *BBC News*, 28 October 2002.



vessels and port facilities and deterring the entrance of foreign traffic into the strait and Taiwan itself.<sup>182</sup>

Over time, a well-executed blockade could pose problems for Taiwan. Were the PLA to augment a blockade with the mining of harbors and the violation of Taiwan's air space, foreign merchant traffic would be increasingly compelled to steer clear of Taiwan.<sup>183</sup> Even if the PRC limited its operations to the selective harassment and interdiction of commercial freighters transiting in and out of Taiwan, a PLA blockade could have far-reaching psychological effects for Taiwan's maritime shipping commerce.<sup>184</sup>

But despite the inherent advantages of this option, the PLA lacks the capacity to implement an effective blockade. The PLA probably does not possess the sufficient air defenses necessary to protect surface ships, nor does its naval command and control structure seem adequate enough to manage the blockade.<sup>185</sup> Moreover, the economic and political ramifications for shutting out Taiwan's foreign commerce could be considerably more than China is willing to endure.

***b. Precision Missile Strike***

In an attempt to demonstrate the impotence of missile defense against China's military deterrent, the PRC might preemptively or punitively launch precision strikes against BMD sites and supporting facilities in Taiwan. Such an act would garner enhanced significance if the PLA were to take out newly installed PAC-3 sites throughout the island. This would not only constitute a demoralizing turn of events for Taiwan, but would also serve as an emphatic statement of China's ability to overcome Taiwan-based missile defenses and its unwillingness to let U.S. defense collaboration impede the reunification process.

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<sup>182</sup> Thomas Christensen, "Posing Problems Without Catching Up," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 4, (Spring 2001), pp.29-32.

<sup>183</sup> Edward Timperlake and William Triplett, *Red Dragon Rising*, (Washington D.C.: Regenery Publishing, 1999), p. 158.

<sup>184</sup> Mulvenon and Swaine, p. 116.

<sup>185</sup> Ivan Eland, "The China-Taiwan Military Balance: Implications for the United States," Foreign Policy Briefing, *The Cato Institute*, No. 74, 5 February 2003.



To do so, however, requires extensive progress in the modernization of China's missile forces. PLA missiles currently lack the accuracy necessary to conduct precision strikes and for the time being are relegated as terror weapons of limited tactical use. Nevertheless, the acquisition of a precision strike capability is a major goal of China's military modernization and appears to be central in the PLA's contingency plans towards Taiwan.<sup>186</sup>

**c. *Amphibious Assault/Full-Scale Attack***

An amphibious assault on Taiwan is the least likely contingency of PRC armed action. Only the most pressing circumstances such as an imminent Taiwanese declaration of independence, a rapid recession in China's ability to coerce Taiwan, or a perception that the window of opportunity for reunification was permanently closing would be sufficient to merit a full frontal assault. Still, China's apparent pledge to "forsake all over Taiwan"<sup>187</sup> suggests that this possibility cannot be ruled out entirely.

Still, even if China deemed a full-scale attack as necessary, there is very little chance of a successful outcome. The PLA is woefully deficient in the craft of amphibious assault, lacking the coordination, landing craft, strategic lift capacity, and requisite air and naval supremacy.<sup>188</sup> Furthermore, a PLA amphibious assault would play directly into the strength of Taiwan's defense. Taiwan's army predicates its existence on defending against a Chinese conventional attack, and it has undergone significant modernization efforts over the past decade in preparation for just such a contingency.

**d. *Combination Attack***

The most likely version of a PLA attack on Taiwan would manifest as a combination of strikes from short and medium-range ballistic missiles and long-range land-attack cruise missiles, information warfare designed to degrade Taiwan's command and control (C2) nodes, special operations targeted against ROC airfields, and fifth

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<sup>186</sup> Thomas Christensen, "Posing Problems Without Catching Up," pp. 26-27; Mark Stokes, *China's Strategic Modernization*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 1999), Ch. 4.

<sup>187</sup> A partial quote from an unnamed but "prominent" PLA officer, in David Smith, "Sun Tzu and the Modern Art of Countering Missile Defence," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Asia: Vol. 12, No. 1, 1 January 2000.

<sup>188</sup> Mulvenon and Swaine, p. 115.



column sabotage. These are all competencies the PLA is actively pursuing, and they collaboratively constitute a means of attack against which Taiwan would have considerable difficulty in defending.<sup>189</sup>

### **C. SUMMARY**

The PRC possesses a variety of means with which to respond to BMD in Taiwan. The United States must in turn be prepared for any amalgam of scenarios. Several determinants of PRC behavior can help prioritize the likely courses of action that Beijing might choose to implement, from political manipulation to military coercion. But while some options are fairly synonymous with significant and adverse repercussions to China's national goals, the question lies in whether or not Beijing's leaders are willing to accept these risks for the sake of unification.

Of the variety of options available, Beijing's most likely responses to missile defense for Taiwan include political efforts to isolate the United States and strategic adjustments to increase its leverage over Taiwan. The PRC can be expected to sustain its drumbeat of rhetoric, work through the United Nations to denigrate U.S. policy in Taiwan, augment its ballistic missile inventory, continue its subversive and clandestine measures to acquire missile defense technology from Taiwan, and perhaps expand its proliferation tendencies. Only the direst of circumstances will compel the PRC to resort to armed measures, although these options cannot be discounted altogether.

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<sup>189</sup> China's progress in areas of missile modernization, information warfare, and special operations are summarized in the "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," 28 July 2003.



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## **V. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S.-CHINA-JAPAN RELATIONS**

This chapter examines the effect of missile defense in Taiwan on the two most important interactive mechanisms between Washington, Tokyo, and Beijing: the U.S.-China-Japan triangular relationship and the U.S.-Japan security alliance. Both structures are essential to realizing U.S. goals in East Asia, but they are also subject to complicating factors that could result from China's adverse reactions to Taiwanese BMD.

### **A. STRATEGIC TRIANGULAR RELATIONS**

Because East Asia lacks a formal mechanism through which consultations on international security and other issues can take place, regional security primarily depends upon the complex network of interactions between Washington, Beijing, and Tokyo.<sup>190</sup> The provision of missile defenses to Taiwan has pertinence to these relations since it might effect contextual changes that undermine the strategic balance between the three countries by undercutting inherent ambiguity, compelling Beijing to disengage from Tokyo and Washington, and fostering a military environment that lowers bilateral confidence.

#### **1. Loss of Strategic Ambiguity**

One way BMD can throw the strategic triangle off kilter is by enervating the American and Japanese policies of strategic ambiguity. The Taiwan question is a central locus of concern within the U.S.-China-Japan triangle,<sup>191</sup> with Beijing's concerns over potential American intervention in the reunification process weighing heavily on Sino-U.S. relations. Washington partially diffuses these suspicions by purposefully obscuring the specifics of its intentions to defend Taiwan in the event of a PRC attack. Similarly, the PRC worries that Japan might assist the United States under the auspices of the U.S.-Japan security alliance, but can only speculate as to Japan's actual intent in light of Tokyo's equally ambiguous rhetoric.

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<sup>190</sup> Thomas Wilborn, *International Politics in Northeast Asia: The China-Japan-United States Strategic Triangle*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 1996), p. 1-2.

<sup>191</sup> Quansheng Zhao, "The Beijing-Tokyo-Washington Triangle," in Marie Söderberg ed., *Chinese-Japanese Relations in the Twenty-first Century: Complementarity and Conflict*, (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 39-40.



The obfuscation of American policy towards Taiwan serves as a crucial management tool for Washington and Tokyo. The United States strives to balance its defensive commitments to Taiwan with reassurances to Beijing that America will not use its superiority to undercut China's security interests or promote Taiwan independence.<sup>192</sup> Through its commitment to the preservation of ROC security, the continued arms sales to Taiwan, and its adherence to the "one China" policy, the United States is able to demonstrate its pledge to the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question without disclosing the extent to which America is willing to enforce these goals. Likewise, Japan balances its recognition of the "one China" policy with its own network of unofficial and commercial ties, but it defers to Washington Beijing's request that Tokyo clarify its stance on the Taiwan issue.<sup>193</sup> This uncertainty generates a level of doubt sufficient enough to deter both sides of the strait from pursuing potentially destabilizing actions.

U.S. support for the provision of missile defenses to Taiwan may not excise the ambiguity of U.S. policy, but does stand to corrupt it by promoting misconceptions of American intentions towards Taiwan. Since the PRC views missile defense as an affront to its sovereignty and a dire threat to its security, Beijing could choose to regard U.S. support for Taiwanese BMD as a signal of intent to obstruct China's reunification efforts or as tacit support of Taiwan independence.<sup>194</sup> Likewise, Taipei could misinterpret the political sacrifices endured by Washington as an indication of U.S. intent. If these sentiments are strong enough to evoke a response from Taipei or Beijing, the United States could see its dual-deterrence strategy mortally compromised, thereby escalating tensions in the region.

PRC suspicions might be further sharpened if the United States and Japan introduced sea-based missile defense systems with the potential to shield Taiwan from PLA missile attacks. This could implicate Japan in what Beijing would consider a U.S.-

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<sup>192</sup> Thomas Christensen, "The Contemporary Security Dilemma: Deterring a Taiwan Conflict," *The Washington Quarterly*, (Autumn 2002), p. 8.

<sup>193</sup> Quansheng Zhao, "The Beijing-Tokyo-Washington Triangle," pp. 39-40.

<sup>194</sup> Peng Weixue, "United States and Taiwan Step Up Military Collaboration to Protect 'Taiwan Independence'," *Renmin Wang*, 23 April 2003, in FBIS.



led plot to formulate a trilateral alliance targeting the PRC, as well as antagonize beliefs that the United States and Japan strive to impede the reunification process.

## **2. PRC Isolation**

BMD in Taiwan can also destabilize the triangular relationship if the resulting frictions result in China's strategic isolation vis-à-vis the United States and Japan. An isolated China is more prone to engage in self-serving behavior—such as weapons proliferation—as a means to achieve its policy goals. Such behavior complicates America's ability to manage its relationship with China and is generally inimical to regional stability.

Neither the United States nor Japan or China derives benefit from the estrangement of any one of the triangle's members.<sup>195</sup> China in particular carries fresh memories of its Cold War existence when a lack of legitimacy precluded its participation in standard international affairs and forced it to undertake alternative and unconventional means to guarantee its security interests. To this day the PRC places emphasis on its ability to engage its regional neighbors and establish itself as a responsible large power, as evidenced by its enthusiastic hosting of six-party talks to discuss DPRK nuclear disarmament. This desire to remain engaged in the determination of regional security correlates with China's abhorrence for American "hegemony" and "containment."<sup>196</sup>

The establishment of missile defense in Taiwan could exacerbate these concerns to a significant extent, fueling the perception in Beijing that China stands alone and in opposition to U.S. political and strategic aspirations in East Asia. PRC confidence in the United States as a fair and honest broker in the Taiwan scenario is extremely tenuous.<sup>197</sup> China is most fearful of the reconstitution of a U.S.-Taiwan defense alliance, and views BMD as the most expedient means towards this end. These perceptions are abetted by

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<sup>195</sup> Even President Clinton's "Japan passing" of 1998 sent unsettling signals to Tokyo that the United States was strategically engaging China at Japan's expense.

<sup>196</sup> The PRC has shown a particular affinity to structures that enable it to enhance its position relative to other nations, or aid it in generating regional and international conditions beneficial to its foreign policy, as evidenced by China's participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum. China calculates that most security forums in which it participates can be ruled out as a threat so long as Beijing is able to maintain a modicum of influence.

<sup>197</sup> See Dong Pu and Nan Zhikun, "Observation on Taiwan Strait: Pledges and Wavering Actions—New Trends of US-Taiwan Relations," *Renmin Wang*, 9 July 2003, in FBIS.



occasional rhetoric from Taipei and conservative circles within the United States supporting the continued advocacy of U.S.-ROC defense cooperation.<sup>198</sup> The resulting mistrust Beijing holds for Washington might erode the foundation for bilateral cooperation, thereby making it more difficult to engender a positive security environment conducive to U.S. interests.

Likewise, China judges Japan to be less than forthcoming about its ambitions towards Taiwan. There are persistent concerns in China that the vagueness of Tokyo's 1972 joint statement with Beijing—Tokyo professes to “understand and respect” Beijing's stance on the Taiwan issue—precludes Japan's official acceptance of the “one China” policy.<sup>199</sup> The PRC is extremely skeptical that Japan wishes to promote Taiwan separatism, and considers Japan's behavior as a decided step away from ambiguity.<sup>200</sup> Beijing's distrust of Tokyo has mirrored a transition in Japan's sentiments towards Taiwan that stems from Japan's growing economic ties with Taiwan as well as Tokyo's admiration for former president Lee Teng-hui and his role in ROC democratization.<sup>201</sup> The infusion of BMD into this context would almost certainly heighten Beijing's apprehensions and might subsequently derail the progress made in Sino-Japanese relations.

### **3. Military Instability**

BMD in Taiwan might also damage the strategic triangle by perpetuating military instability among the three actors. The possibilities that missile defense could either degrade the political potency of China's military strength relative to Japan and Taiwan or incite other adverse military trends in East Asia could serve to diminish the viability of the strategic triangular relationship.

The insecurity associated with an inability to conduct effective missile strikes against targets in the East Asia theater of operations weighs heavily on the minds of PRC strategic planners, many of whom consider ballistic missiles to be China's only salient

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Jiang Lifan, “Taiwan Question Core Of Relations,” *China Daily*, 18 July 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>200</sup> Dr. David Fouse, Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, interview by Darren E. Rice, 8 July 2003, Honolulu Hawaii.

<sup>201</sup> Wang, Qingxin, “Taiwan in Japan's Relations with China and the United States after the Cold War,” p. 358-60.



form of coercion against Japan and Taiwan. The PRC also frets over the possibility that Japanese sea-based missile defense assets could be used to defend Taiwan, which would likely result in the participation of Japanese naval forces in a PRC-Taiwan conflict.<sup>202</sup>

The PRC also perceives missile defenses as a portent of undesirable developments in the East Asian military context. China declares that Japanese missile defense assets used to protect Taiwan may unfavorably shape the military context in East Asia by enhancing Taiwan's offensive capabilities and emboldening Japanese militarism. PRC scholars often stress the inherent dangers of missile defenses by referring to the ease with which BMD technology can be translated into offensive potential.<sup>203</sup> Regarding Taiwan, some worry that the provision of missile defense systems in conjunction with early warning capabilities will allow the ROC to project power in the air-space over the Taiwan Strait and the Chinese mainland.<sup>204</sup> Of equal concern is the possibility that Japan might share BMD technical specifications with Taiwan.<sup>205</sup> A perceived military imbalance comprised of a resurgent Japanese military and an increasingly audacious ROC armed forces doctrine replete with offensive capabilities would severely lower China's comfort level vis-à-vis the United States and Japan.

## **B. U.S.-JAPAN ALLIANCE**

The fallout from BMD delivery to Taiwan could have negative implications for America's greatest strategic asset in East Asia—the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance. The U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of U.S. strategic positioning in Asia, as well as a fundamental contributor to regional security and stability.<sup>206</sup> Yet despite the commonality

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<sup>202</sup> Evan S. Medeiros, Rapporteur, "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security: Views From Washington, Beijing, and Tokyo", *The Stanley Foundation and Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies*, 30 November-5 December 2000, p. 11.

<sup>203</sup> Lu Yousheng, "Relations Among Big Powers and Security in Northeast Asia," *Liaowang*, 22 May 2000, in FBIS.

<sup>204</sup> A visiting PRC scholar reconfirmed this statement. Also see Zhigang Fu' First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, Geneva, "Concerns and Responses -- A Chinese Perspective on NMD/TMD," Consultation On NATO Nuclear Policy, National Missile Defence & Alternative Security Arrangements, 28-30 September, 2000, <[www.ploughshares.ca/content/ABOLISH%20NUCS/Simons%20Conf%20Ottawa/Fu.html](http://www.ploughshares.ca/content/ABOLISH%20NUCS/Simons%20Conf%20Ottawa/Fu.html)>, 29 August 2003.

<sup>205</sup> Evan S. Medeiros, Rapporteur, "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security: Views From Washington, Beijing, and Tokyo", p. 11.

<sup>206</sup> Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser, "Chinese Apprehensions about Revitalization of the U.S.-Japan Alliance," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (April 1997), p. 383.



evoked by the alliance, beneath the surface lies an array of contradictory interests with respects to Taiwan that could potentially derail U.S.-Japan strategic corroboration.

## **1. Entrapment**

If missile defense in Taiwan were to evoke a military response from the PRC, Japan's foremost concern would center on its obligations as specified in the 1997 revised treaty guidelines, which stipulate that Japan is to provide rear area support and operational cooperation for the United States in "situations in areas surrounding Japan." While this does not require Japan to supply troops for front-line operations, Tokyo is nonetheless uneasy about the ramifications of any compulsory involvement in a conflict of minimal pertinence to Japanese security.

### ***a. Regional and Bilateral Stability***

Japan is keenly aware of the importance in maintaining its bilateral relationships with Washington and Beijing, and adamantly wishes to prevent the onset of circumstances that could plunge East Asia into crisis. It is even more reluctant to place itself in a compromising position wherein Japan's relations with the United States and the PRC become mutually exclusive.

The Japanese do not possess an equivalent to America's TRA that can serve as a foil for the justification of Japan's Taiwan policy, and they must therefore exercise greater discretion to ensure that their policies do not infringe upon China's sovereignty. Ideally, Tokyo would prefer to uphold its relatively positive standing in Beijing and Washington by functioning as a third-party broker. The Japanese have heartily taken to this role, often demonstrating a proneness to engaging in ambiguous behavior designed to keep the remaining two parties off balance in an attempt to preserve regional stability. This was aptly demonstrated by Tokyo's ambiguous behavior throughout the 2001 EP-3 crisis between China and the United States, when Japan deftly catered to both parties in efforts to facilitate a peaceful resolution.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> For a more thorough analysis of regional roles in the EP-3 crisis, see Gaye Christoffersen, "The Role of East Asia in Sino-American Relations," *Asia Survey*, Vol. 42, No. 3, (May/June 2002), pp. 376-379.



In a sense, Japan's role as a mediator also functions to temper an occasionally unsettling U.S. approach to China and the Taiwan question.<sup>208</sup> At a speech to the Japanese Diet in February 2001, President Bush resolved never to forget the commitment made to the people of Taiwan. This statement left a number of Japanese officials somewhat daunted.<sup>209</sup> Many Japanese consider Washington's Taiwan policy abrasive to U.S.-China relations, thereby constituting a "serious dilemma" for Japanese decision makers. As a result, Japan walks a fine line of diplomacy, unable (or unwilling) to formulate a definitive policy towards China.<sup>210</sup>

**b. Socio-Economic Welfare**

The notion of Japan's involuntary participation in a strait crisis carries several implications that leave Tokyo officials and experts wary. Japan's proximity to China and Taiwan produces a unique strategic dynamic that U.S. officials may not thoroughly appreciate. During the PLA's military exercises in 1996 a DF-15 missile landed a mere 60 km off of Yonaguni Island,<sup>211</sup> which itself lies a scant 127 km from Taiwan's northeastern shore.

The 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis also demonstrated that Japan could face significant humanitarian issues were hostilities to erupt. Of foremost concern for a Japanese prime minister would be the extraction of Japanese nationals from Taiwan. As of October 2002, the number of Japanese citizens in Taiwan stands greater than 15,000,<sup>212</sup> excluding the thousands of tourists that frequent the island at any given time. Upon the outbreak of the 1995-1996 crisis in the Taiwan Strait, former Prime Minister Hashimoto reportedly was extremely anxious over how his SDF would rescue the roughly 20,000 Japanese nationals in Taiwan if circumstances mandated.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Many Japanese scoff at the notion that the U.S.-Japan alliance restrains Japanese militarism, believing instead that it is U.S. unilateralism that is hamstrung by the alliance. See Yukio Okamoto, "Japan and the United States: The Essential Alliance," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 2, (Spring 2002), p. 61.

<sup>209</sup> *Nikkei Telecom* 21, 25 February 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Yoichi Funabashi, *Alliance Adrift*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), p. 351-352.

<sup>212</sup> Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 2003, <[www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/taiwan/](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/taiwan/)>, 7 August 2003.

<sup>213</sup> Yoichi Funabashi, *Alliance Adrift*, pp. 386-387.



In addition to these social concerns, Japan is mindful of the far-reaching economic implications a strait conflict carries with it, particularly the susceptibility of Japan's maritime commerce to cross strait turmoil. At stake for Japan is the robust network of economic ties and trade, of which roughly 43 percent sources from Asia.<sup>214</sup> Taiwan itself serves as Japan's fifth largest export market, and seventh largest supplier of imports. During the 1996 crisis, Hashimoto is said to have focused intently on the impact of China's missile exercises on Japanese livelihood, particularly with regards to oil transportation and trade with China and Southeast Asia.<sup>215</sup>

**c. Domestic and Political Resistance**

The constant domestic rancor regarding Japan's reshaping its constitution and abandoning its principled opposition of a standing military force will also factor significantly in Tokyo's logic and could spawn political results adverse to U.S. expectations and desires. Prime Minister Koizumi is intent on sustaining a relationship with the United States built upon intimate military cooperation and tandem foreign policy initiatives. However, all of Japan does not necessarily concede to the exercise of collective defense authority. Much of the Japanese public, as well as portions of the ruling LDP and its political opposition, is either unwilling or unable to justify a collective security doctrine or any tampering with Article 9.<sup>216</sup>

Some indicators suggest that even those circumstances meriting Japan's unbridled backing of U.S. policy may not be enough to galvanize public sentiment for Japan's military support. Following the September 11 tragedy, 66 percent of people polled supported U.S. military retaliation, whereas only 8 percent advocated Japanese participation.<sup>217</sup> Likewise, Prime Minister Koizumi's speech in the following days

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<sup>214</sup> International Trade Statistics 2002, *World Trade Organization*, <[www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/statis\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/statis_e.htm)>, 2 August 2003.

<sup>215</sup> Yoichi Funabashi, *Alliance Adrift*, p. 387.

<sup>216</sup> Axel Berkofsky, "Japan's New 'Assertive Foreign Policy' And US-Japan Security Relations," *Global Beat*, <[www.nyu.edu/globalbeat/berkofsky081301.html](http://www.nyu.edu/globalbeat/berkofsky081301.html)>, 19 July 2003.

<sup>217</sup> Testimony of Brad F. Glosserman, Director of Research, Pacific Forum CSIS, *Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific*, 15 November 2001, <[www.house.gov/international\\_relations/glos1115.htm](http://www.house.gov/international_relations/glos1115.htm)>, 12 June 2003.



called for Japan to support the U.S. effort on terrorism, but only within the confines of Japan's constitutional limits.<sup>218</sup>

## **2. Implications**

Japanese hesitance could result in a number of adverse contingencies for the U.S.-Japan alliance, of which U.S. planners must be cognizant when proceeding with BMD in Taiwan. The most salient implication for the alliance involves the emergence of potential fissures between Washington and Tokyo. In the event that Japan fails to provide the requisite support for U.S. operations in the defense of Taiwan, numerous critics will contend that the alliance had failed a crucial test. These voices could advocate another retooling of the guidelines or the dissolution of the alliance altogether. Conversely, the alliance could also experience difficulties if the United States disappoints Japan by not intervening on Taiwan's behalf in the desired fashion. A failure to come to Taiwan's aid in the event of a PRC attack could be construed in Japan either as a blatant attempt to mend relations with China at the expense of U.S.-Japan bilateral security, or as an omen of a more general waning of U.S. commitment to its friends and allies in East Asia. Such a turn of events could precipitate a stronger surge in Japanese desires to pursue a more independent course.

An equally pressing consideration for United States concerns the expediency with which bilateral consultations could result in a satisfactory course of action. The 1997 guidelines specify that the anticipation of a "situation in areas surrounding Japan" should result in the intensification of bilateral policy consultations and the simultaneous preparation of "coordinated responses according to the readiness stage selected by mutual agreement." However, these "consultations" are likely to be extremely contentious and painstakingly time consuming. Japan experts are skeptical that the U.S.-Japan alliance would function swiftly enough even in a situation where American and Japanese security interests coincide.<sup>219</sup> Masashi Nishihara, head of the Japanese National Defense Academy, characterized the notion that Japan and the United States can expeditiously

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Sheila A. Smith, "The Evolution of Military Cooperation in the U.S.-Japan Alliance," in Cronin and Green, *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, pp. 86-87.



create a wartime defense cooperative based on the 1997 guidelines as “too optimistic.”<sup>220</sup> The United States must anticipate that the expeditious consolidation of divergent U.S. and Japanese interests, particularly pertaining to a topic as controversial as Taiwan, could pose considerable difficulties.

Depending on circumstances, the United States could also encounter roadblocks in using its forward deployed forces stationed in Japan for operations directly pertinent to the defense of Taiwan. For example, even if Japan were amenable to the United States using aircraft stationed in Okinawa, Kadena, or elsewhere to fly combat air patrol (CAP) over positions in Taiwan, Tokyo would almost certainly object to these very same jets conducting strike missions on Chinese targets.<sup>221</sup> This subjection of U.S. military operations to Japanese apprehensions could potentially impair their effectiveness, thereby altering U.S. strategy and possibly forcing the United States to pursue alternative contingencies.

### **C. SUMMARY**

The United States should place at least a moderate amount of emphasis on the implications of U.S. extension of BMD to Taiwan for U.S.-China-Japan relations. Balance within the strategic triangle cannot be maintained without requisite ambiguity from Beijing and Washington. BMD in Taiwan could undermine the efficacy of Washington and Tokyo’s policy of strategic ambiguity by encouraging necessarily false perceptions within Beijing. The lack of confidence resulting from these perceptions may isolate China, thereby invoking activities detrimental to regional stability. Missile defense for Taiwan could also conjure a military milieu that Beijing perceives as threatening and destabilizing.

The potential ramifications with respects to the U.S.-Japan alliance merit more concern. The Japanese are silent on U.S. initiatives to sell missile defense systems to Taiwan, but they are quite concerned about its stake in the fallout from antagonizing U.S. policies. A Taiwan Strait crisis necessitating a military response from the United States

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<sup>220</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, “Interview with Masashi Nishihara, head of the National Defense Academy and expert in international relations: ‘Equal Partnership Comes With Greater Say’,” 27 September 2002, in FBIS.

<sup>221</sup> This according to discussions with several Japan scholars and experts, all of which concede that Japan’s support during a Taiwan Strait conflict is anything but guaranteed.



would force Japan to weigh the risks and merits of jeopardizing its own interests for the sake of Taiwan's security. Depending on circumstances, the potential exists for either Tokyo or Washington to disappoint the other through activities (or lack thereof) not in tune with national interests. Either scenario promises to generate enmity between Tokyo and Washington. The overriding fear is that the stipulations of the U.S.-Japan alliance will give way to Japanese obstinacy, proving insufficient to gather the requisite Japanese support for a U.S. military defense of Taiwan, and thus prove itself anemic as a viable security mechanism.



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## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **A. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY**

Based on the repercussions discussed in Chapters Four and Five, the United States must be prepared to handle a variety of circumstances that may have negative implications for U.S. security interests. Of the contingencies that could arise from the delivery of BMD to Taiwan, several stand out as posing more crucial threats to U.S. security interests in East Asia.

#### **1. Combating WMD Proliferation**

Despite indications that the PRC may be constraining its proliferation tendencies, the United States must still consider China's transfer of missile components and technology to rogue states as a viable contingency that threatens to undermine stated U.S. desires to "prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends, with weapons of mass destruction."<sup>222</sup> The U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) advocates the use of strengthened alliances as well as partnerships with former adversaries to respond to rogue state and terrorist attempts to acquire WMD capabilities. As part of this effort, Washington fully expects the PRC to uphold its nonproliferation commitments.<sup>223</sup>

Unfortunately, nuclear weapons and missile technology proliferation are staples of China's national security policy,<sup>224</sup> and there is strong evidence suggesting that China may resort to weapons proliferation in an attempt to counter U.S. policy decisions. Weapons transfers to Iran and Pakistan in particular have been problematic for the United States in recent years.<sup>225</sup> On 3 July 2003, the United States imposed sanctions on five Chinese firms and a North Korean establishment in response to contraventions of the Iran Non-Proliferation Act of 2000.<sup>226</sup> One of the companies, Changgwang Sinyong, had

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<sup>222</sup> The White House, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," September 2002, Ch. V.

<sup>223</sup> The White House, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," Ch. VIII.

<sup>224</sup> Mohan Malik, "China Plays 'The Proliferation Card'."

<sup>225</sup> See "China's Missile Business," *The Washington Post*, 14 July 2000, p. A-22.

<sup>226</sup> Matthew Lee, "US Slaps Sanctions on Chinese, Nkorean Firms for Arms Sales to Iran," *Agence France Presse*, 3 July 2003, in Lexis-Nexis.



been disciplined for previous violations of Iranian arms transfers in 2000 and was the subject of prior punitive action in 1996, 1998, and 2000 for missile-specific export regulations.<sup>227</sup> On 24 July 2003, Washington slapped more sanctions on the PRC pursuant to the provisions of Executive Orders 12938 and 13094. Since President Bush's inauguration in 2000, the United States has sanctioned China on eight separate occasions in response to proliferation violations.<sup>228</sup>

All of this has transpired within the context of China's reluctance to accede to certain multilateral export-control regimes like the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group, and—most significantly—the MTCR,<sup>229</sup> which the PRC has yet to join.<sup>230</sup> The latitude afforded to China by its reluctance to abide by these regimes provides greater leeway in justifying its refusal to conform to U.S. counter-proliferation requests.

It must also be noted that inclinations towards clandestine behavior of this sort run deep in Chinese strategy. Only within the past decade has the PRC shown any signs of willingness to curb its proliferation activities. The PRC is much more accustomed to viewing proliferation as a useful tool for curbing U.S. hegemony and diffusing U.S. power among multiple states.<sup>231</sup> The United States should not be surprised to see China resort to activities with which it is most comfortable.

**a. Recommendation**

Persistent appeals by Washington to Beijing about the negative repercussions and mutual dangers of weapons proliferation must continue at the highest levels. Bilateral consultations must stress the negative implications of WMD proliferation for PRC security and prestige. In addition, they should explicitly convey

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> For a summary of these and other sanctions, visit "US Arms Control/Nonproliferation Sanctions Against China," *NTI*, 31 July 2003, <[www.nti.org/db/china/sanclist.htm](http://www.nti.org/db/china/sanclist.htm)>, 14 September 2003.

<sup>229</sup> "China: Missile regulations unlikely to satisfy US concerns," *Oxford Analytica*, 18 October 2002, <[www.oxresearch.oxweb.com/daily\\_brief.asp?NewsItemID=86862&StoryDate=October+18%2C+2002&Link=TRUE](http://www.oxresearch.oxweb.com/daily_brief.asp?NewsItemID=86862&StoryDate=October+18%2C+2002&Link=TRUE)>, 29 August 2003.

<sup>230</sup> The United States and other MTCR members fear that China's incorporation into the MTCR guidelines drafting process will result in China's exposure to sensitive missile design information. See "Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)," *NTI*, 26 March 2003, <[www.nti.org/db/china/mtcrorg.htm](http://www.nti.org/db/china/mtcrorg.htm)>, 10 September 2003.

<sup>231</sup> Brad Roberts, p. A-24-A25.



that China's proliferation habits only worsen the bilateral relationship and that their actions fail to bring Taiwan any closer to reunification.

Washington might also consider implementing more thorough measures of censure that solicit domestic and multilateral involvement in the event a country is caught violating counter-proliferation practices. Given China's aversion to international isolation, the pursuit of multilateral collaboration through multinational bodies—such as the United Nations or the ASEAN Regional Forum—might succeed in pressuring Beijing to conform to accepted counter-proliferation practices. In addition, the United States should continue to incorporate its friends and allies in more active counter-proliferation activities such as the newly introduced Proliferation Security Initiative.<sup>232</sup>

## **2. Strengthening the U.S.-Japan Alliance**

The repercussions of missile defense in Taiwan for the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance merits attention from U.S. security planners. The prospect of choosing between Washington and Beijing is cause for trepidation among Japanese diplomats and officials, but while the gravity of such a situation has not escaped Tokyo's leaders, little headway has been made regarding an actual decision. Several prominent voices within the Japanese government have expressed their resolute faith that Japan, given the choice, would always defer to its commitment to the United States. Others hold fast the belief that Japan's interests in Taiwan provide insufficient motivation to warrant an active defense of the ROC.<sup>233</sup> Ultimately, no one—not even the Japanese—can accurately predict Japan's reaction to a Taiwan Strait crisis.

This should be cause for concern in Washington. The uncertainty associated with Japan's indecision stands to mitigate American planning efforts concerning a Taiwan scenario. Tokyo's ambiguity constitutes a challenge to U.S. decision-making<sup>234</sup> and complicates the formulation of a cohesive bilateral strategy. While Japan's reticence

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<sup>232</sup> The United States, Japan, Australia, and the United Kingdom are among the eleven nations comprising the Proliferation Security Initiative. See Rebecca Weiner, "Proliferation Security Initiative to Stem the Flow of WMD Materiel," *Monterey Institute for International Graduate Studies: Center for Nonproliferation Studies*, 16 July 2003, <cns.mii.edu/pubs/week/030716.htm>, 13 September 2003.

<sup>233</sup> Ted Osius, pp. 24-25.

<sup>234</sup> Benjamin L. Self, "United States-Japan Strategic Dialogue," *Public Seminar*, 15 January 2001, <www.glocomnet.or.jp/okazaki-inst/e2juproje/e2juproje5.taiwan.html>, 2 July 2003.



about specifying its intent to use force in a Taiwan crisis sends a deterrent message to Taipei and Beijing, it also undercuts the efficacy of U.S.-Japan cooperation by mitigating the level of strategic dialogue between the two.

**a. Recommendation**

The United States and Japan must endeavor to increase the transparency in their security relationship. Otherwise, the potential that Washington might implement key decisions without thoroughly appreciating the implications for Tokyo, or vice versa, could disrupt bilateral cohesion. Enhanced strategic dialogue is the most prudent fashion through which Tokyo and Washington can mitigate bilateral inconsistencies. Resolving the incongruities of Japanese and American policies—what Benjamin Self terms the “dual ambiguity” problem—will help alleviate doubts concerning one another’s intentions.<sup>235</sup>

Washington and Tokyo may also consider conducting contingency non-governmental studies to facilitate force and policy coordination.<sup>236</sup> Both sides should contemplate potential scenarios and establish a basis of commonality that provides each with the necessary transparency into the other’s intentions. It is crucial, however, that these studies be informal in nature so as not to provoke PRC suspicions.

**3. Forging Cooperative Relations with Centers of Global Power**

The repercussions for the delivery of BMD systems to Taiwan may also encroach upon American efforts to forge cooperative relations with global centers of power, another tenet of the NSS. The United States may find it increasingly difficult to foster an environment predicated on the establishment of broad, multilateral coalitions if bilateral mistrust continues to flourish.

The resonating animosity resulting from BMD in Taiwan could dampen the prospects of forming a “constructive relationship with a changing China.”<sup>237</sup> Outside of areas where China’s interests are satisfied (such as bilateral trade, economic

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<sup>235</sup> Benjamin L. Self, “The China Problem, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security of Taiwan,” in *United States-Japan Strategic Dialogue: Beyond the Defense Guidelines: Policy Recommendations for the New Millennium*, Pacific Forum CSIS, Honolulu, May 2001, p. 153.

<sup>236</sup> Murata Koji, “The U.S.-Japan Alliance and Taiwan,” in *United States-Japan Strategic Dialogue: Beyond the Defense Guidelines: Policy Recommendations for the New Millennium*, p. 141-142.

<sup>237</sup> The White House, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” Ch. VIII.



collaboration, and cooperation on counter-terrorism), Beijing may be reticent to subscribe to the U.S. brand of bilateral and coalition cooperation. Indeed, under the auspices of its New Security Concept introduced in 1996, the PRC prefers to forge its own network of “strategic partnerships” designed to “realize mutual friendship [and] to strengthen cooperation” in opposition to U.S. alliances and the concomitant Cold War mentality.<sup>238</sup> This outlook helps explain Beijing’s aversion to the recently implemented American-led Proliferation Security Initiative. China serves as the representative voice of other nations that apparently harbor doubts regarding the legality of the U.S.-led initiative, advocating the utilization of dialogue and consultation as an alternative method to stem the proliferation tide.<sup>239</sup>

The possibility also exists that perceived U.S. encroachment upon Chinese internal affairs would retard what some identify as a gradual democratic transition in China. The democratic progression of China is crucial to the development of a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Asia-Pacific region.<sup>240</sup> However, an adversarial relationship with China facilitates the efforts of PRC hardliners to impede political reform.<sup>241</sup> Already, open hostility between the Republican Party and the PRC contributes to an environment restrictive to U.S. exertion of influence, and might even precipitate a short-term deterioration of conditions in China as its leaders cope with the political stresses associated with economic reforms.<sup>242</sup>

**a. Recommendation**

A careful balance of deterrence and reassurances are required to ensure that U.S.-China relations continue to progress in a positive direction. Efforts should be made to enhance the transparency of America’s Taiwan policy. Strict opposition to the

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<sup>238</sup> See Denny Roy, “China’s Pitch for a Multipolar World: The New Security Concept,” *Asia-Pacific Security Studies*, Volume 2, No. 1, (May 2003); and Robert Sutter, “China’s Recent Approach to Asia: Seeking Long-Term Gains,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, PacNet Newsletter #23, 7 June 2003, <[www.csis.org/pacfor/pac0223.htm](http://www.csis.org/pacfor/pac0223.htm)>, 12 September 2003.

<sup>239</sup> *Xinhua*, 4 September 2003, in FBIS.

<sup>240</sup> The White House, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” Ch. VIII.

<sup>241</sup> George Gilboy and Eric Heginbotham, “China’s Coming Transformation,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 4, (July-August 2001), pp. 38-39.

<sup>242</sup> Minxin Pei, “Future Shock: The WTO and Political Change in China,” *The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2001, p. 6.



unilateral alteration of the status quo by either Taipei or Beijing will help keep both sides of the strait in check.<sup>243</sup> U.S. policy should emphasize continued commitment to ROC security while stressing that Taipei abstains from any provocative activity.

Greater lucidity in the U.S.-Japan alliance will also serve as a confidence builder between Beijing and Washington. The PRC intensely scrutinizes the U.S.-Japan alliance in attempts to derive insight into American and Japanese intentions, and it actively seeks measures by which it can elevate its own comfort level in the face of Japanese militarization and the perceived expansion of American military influence. Some PRC scholars have even expressed interest granting Beijing observer status in the alliance.<sup>244</sup> By demonstrating that U.S.-Japan bilateral security cooperation constitutes no threat to PRC security interests, China may be more inclined to behave in a fashion conducive to U.S. interests in East Asia.

## **B. CONCLUSION**

Stability in the Taiwan Strait and the perpetuation of strategic balance within the triangular relationship of the region's preeminent powers—the United States, China, and Japan—are the guarantors of long-term security in East Asia. Upsetting this already precarious equilibrium could have disastrous consequences for U.S.-China-Japan relations and all of Asia as well. This, in turn, could have adverse effects on the U.S. ability to meet its foreign policy and national security goals.

Particular attention must be paid to Beijing and its potential reactions to BMD in Taiwan, for they are the drivers that shape the outcome for U.S. security interests in East Asia. The PRC derives much utility from perpetuating its own victimization at the hands of U.S. intransigence and ROC insubordination, thus affording it a greater power base with which to garner international sympathy while maintaining a relatively stable environment supportive of its economic growth. Meanwhile, China employs a variety of calculated and in some cases provocative courses of action designed to isolate the ROC and thwart its integration into the international community. And as Taiwan's prospects

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<sup>243</sup> Michael D. Swaine, "The Turnaround in U.S.-China Relations and the Taiwan Issue," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>244</sup> PRC scholars broached this idea during a visit to the Naval Postgraduate School on 4 September 2003.



for nationhood continue to disappoint while its economic dependence on the Mainland steadily increases, Beijing remains cognizant that time is on China's side. Even with the delivery of missile defense capabilities to Taiwan, the PRC will strive to perpetuate these trends, but only as long as they maximize China's interests. Only as a last resort, where the regime's very survival hung in the balance, would the PRC exercise options in response to BMD for Taiwan that were counter-intuitive to its interests.

Still, the United States must be prepared to manage the full scale of repercussions for providing BMD for Taiwan, which could include the instigation of an unwanted crisis in the Taiwan Strait, the retarding of any trends of closer collaboration between Washington, Beijing, and Tokyo, and the emergence of doubts regarding the solidity of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance. There is a strong likelihood that BMD for Taiwan would greatly exacerbate Beijing's already incessant desire to reunify Taiwan with the Mainland and could instill a sense of urgency among PRC leaders to resolve the situation despite the assortment of consequences. It might also add controversy to the complex network of bilateral relations that constitutes the strategic triangle between Washington, Beijing, and Tokyo. And given the circumstances, fissures in the U.S.-Japan security relationship might emerge depending on Tokyo's perceptions.

Nevertheless, these implications can be mitigated through strategic preparation and attentive diplomacy. By anticipating and developing contingent responses for PRC reactions, promoting a favorable political environment, and fostering areas of mutual cooperation, the United States can help ensure that missile defenses for Taiwan do not preclude the maximization of American security interests.



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